MODERN MUSLIM INDIA AND THE BIRTH OF PAKISTAN

(1858 - 1951)

S. M. IKRAM, M. A., HON. D. LITT.

SH. MUHAMMAD ASHRAF
KASHMIRI BAZAR - LAHORE

Pak Move
E2 1965

MODERN MUSLIM INDIA AND THE
BIRTH OF PAKISTAN
1858—1951

Saif Ali
MSc. (Final)
Department of Applied Psychology,
New Campus, University of the
Punjab, Lahore.

July 11, 1972.

Khursal Hasan
M.A., LL.B.

MODERN MUSLIM INDIA
AND THE
BIRTH OF PAKISTAN

(1858—1951)

S. M. IKRAM, M.A., Hon. D.Litt.,
Civil Service of Pakistan

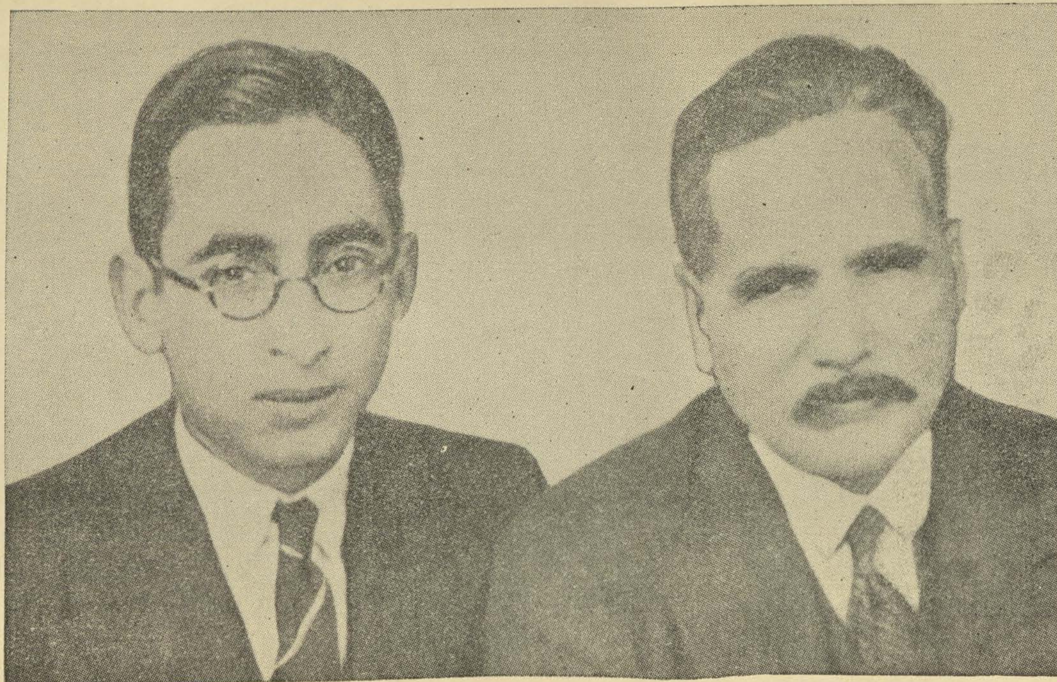
SH. MUHAMMAD ASHRAF
KASHMIRI BAZAR, LAHORE (PAKISTAN)

First Edition, 1950
Second Edition
Revised and Enlarged, July, 1965

Printed by
M. Naseer Baig
at Jadeed Urdu Type Press
39, Chamberlain Road, Lahore

and

Published by
Sh. Muhammad Ashraf
Kashmiri Bazar, Lahore (Pakistan)



(p. v) THE AUTHOR — London 29-12-1932 — ALLAMA IQBAL

To
The Memory
of
IQBAL

PREFACE

This book originally appeared in 1950, under the title, *Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India* (by A. H. Albiruni), and has been out of print for some years. It was not reissued earlier, as I wished to bring the account up-to-date. This has not been found possible, and the present volume deals only with the period ending with the death of Liaquat Ali Khan. The original book has, however, been greatly enlarged, and I hope the additions are substantial enough to justify the change in the title. Out of fifteen chapters, five are entirely new—including a long chapter on developments in the areas which now constitute Pakistan,—and there are considerable additions in others. A new section, which may not find ready acceptance, but which has given the writer something of a joy of discovery relates to "Jinnah, the man and the statesman". Some tendentious statements regarding the happenings in East Punjab at the time of Partition, made by V. P. Menon in his *The Transfer of Power in India*, which is an important source-book for the period, have made it desirable to deal with that grisley chapter in the history of the sub-continent at some length.

The book has been inscribed to the memory of Iqbal, not only in acknowledgment of the way, he inspired the author's generation, but also in gratitude for many acts of gracious kindness. In revising the text and seeing it through the press I have been helped by Dr. Syed Razi Wasti, to whom my thanks are due.

A word or two about the origin of some of the pictures appearing in this book may be of interest. The historic photograph of the gathering which took part in the foundation of All-India Muslim League in 1906 was obtained at Dacca. The author, as Member, Board of Revenue, East Pakistan (1955-57) was in charge of State Acquisition (Abolition of *Zamindari*)

and the Court of Wards. The estate of the heirs of Nawab Salim Ullah Khan was under the administration of the Court of Wards, and the Manager of the Nawab Estate, at my request, borrowed from one of the heirs the original group photograph, and arranged for the identification of as many participants as was possible. The photograph was somewhat faded and Messrs Zaidis, Photographers (Dacca Branch) had to make special efforts to have a reasonable reproduction. The group photograph with Iqbal is a memento of the days when the poet was in England in connection with the third Round Table Conference. The autograph copies signed by Iqbal are dated "London, 29 December 1932". Shibli's photograph was obtained, shortly before Partition, from Atiya Begum, who, as is well-known, inspired the lyrics of *Dasta-i-Gul* and *Bu'e-i-Gul* and to whom the picture was presented by Maulana himself. For an unpublished photograph of Mian Fazl-i Hussain, I am indebted to his daughter, Begum Asghari Manzur Qadir.

In the end, it may be worth while stating that the conclusions drawn in the course of the narrative, and comments made are entirely my responsibility. "There is nothing official about this book. It is a purely private and personal affair."

1-7-65 S. M. IKRAM

INTRODUCTION

In the coming pages an attempt has been made to trace the developments concerning Muslims of Indo-Pakistan sub-continent from the unsuccessful War of Independence till the death of Liaquat Ali Khan. Our approach has been largely biographical, but figures have been so selected, and the sketches so arranged, that it may be possible to read in these pages a more or less connected story of the struggle which ultimately led to the establishment of Pakistan.

The British success in quelling the country-wide Revolt of 1857, and the direct assumption by the Queen of England, of government of India, finally set the seal on the extinction of the Mughal Empire of Delhi. It was followed by a further weakening of the Muslim political position which had continued to decline since the death of Aurangzeb. After the Revolt, the position of the Muslims deteriorated still further, as they had to bear the brunt of the distrust, nay, active hostility of the new masters. Syed Ahmed Khan and his band of workers had to deal with this situation, and by winning the confidence of the British rulers of India, and by urging upon the Muslims to learn modern sciences and acquire new learning, they enabled the Indian Muslims to adjust themselves to the new circumstances.

For nearly forty years this group or what may be called the Aligarh School of Politics, was in power, and our first three sketches, *i.e.*, those of Syed Ahmed Khan, Hali and Mohsin-ul-Mulk, relate to the leaders of this group.

Viqar-ul-Mulk was also one of the Aligarh band of workers, but he had to assume leadership at a time when the annulment of the partition of Bengal, in December, 1911, clearly showed that government was not proof against the pressure of political agitation, and it was impossible to safeguard the just interests of

Indian Muslims by depending wholly on the goodwill and fairplay of the government in power. The last years of Viqar-ul-Mulk and the career of Maulana Muhamad Ali belong to a period when the old Aligarh policy had lost ground and a new one had yet to take its place. The process of transformation was greatly accelerated by Shibli and Abul Kalam Azad, who not only criticised the policy of the Aligarh School in political, religious, and educational spheres, but tried to build up a rival leadership by organizing and increasing the influence of the Ulama. The resultant confusion was brought to an end by two men of genius—*Hakim-ul-Ummat* Iqbal, and *Quaid-i-Azam* Jinnah. They supplied the want of a new, realistic and constructive policy, and one, by seeing the vision of a Muslim state formed by the grouping together of the Muslim majority areas, and the other by establishing that state, brought the new policy to a successful end. The way for the success of the Quaid was paved by the provincial leaders who built up the Muslim position in the areas where they were in a majority but had been politically and economically ineffective, and by the Aga Khan, who headed the historic Simla Deputation in 1906 and played an important part at the Round Table Conference, a quarter of century later. Muslim Bengal was slow to start, but its contribution on two crucial occasions—at the time of the foundation of All-India Muslim League at Dacca in 1906, and again, at the time of Partition—was important, almost decisive. Amongst her worthy sons whose careers have been sketched in this book are Syed Amir Ali, Nawab Salim Ullah Khan, A.K. Fazl-ul-Haq, Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy and Khwaja Nazim-ud-din. Liaquat Ali Khan's role, during the lifetime of the Quaid, was that of a loyal and efficient lieutenant, but even then, his services were substantial enough to earn for him the title of the Quaid's "right hand". After Quaid's death, his responsibilities greatly increased, and the able and skilful manner in which he discharged them was a factor in the consolidation of Pakistan.

Much of the material we have used, particularly in the earlier part of our book, is in Urdu. Foreign observers, who do not have access to the material in Urdu, have naturally taken

time to grasp fully the developments in the national life of the Muslims of the sub-continent, and only now, the significance of the forces which paved the way for Pakistan is being realised, For a long time it was thought that not only was the Quaid-i-Azam responsible for winning Pakistan, but that his advocacy was responsible for the adoption of Pakistan as a goal by Indian Muslims. Now, however, the truth is begininng to be realised. Morgan Phillips-Price, the prominent socialist leader of England. who, on account of his deep study of Muslim literature, was well-qualified to understand the deeper currents influencing Muslim life, said at a meeting of the East India Association :

> "Some hold the belief that but for Mr. Jinnah, who channelised the Muslim impulse for security and freedom, Pakistan would not have been achieved. After my tour of Pakistan, I am convinced that without Mr. Jinnah, it would have still come into existence. But it would have been a very painful emergence.[1]

This is, perhaps, nearer the truth, At any rate, those who will read in the coming pages, an account of Syed Ahmed Khan's conversations with the Commissioner of Benares in 1867 and his historic letter to Mohsin-ul-Mulk, regarding the destiny of the Hindus and the Muslims, his remarks on Lord Ripon's Local Self-Government Bill of 1883, and his later speech advising Muslims to keep away from the Indian National Congress, will agree that the stage was set and much spade work done long before the Quaid-i-Azam took up the cause of Pakistan. Quaid's part in the struggle was decisive and he was, indeed, the chief architect of Pakistan but the foundation had been truly and firmly laid by another great man—Syed Ahmed Khan. As Dr. Percival Spear remarks, "In his (Syed Ahmad Khan's) whole attitude was implicit the concept of Pakistan. It only needed the prospect of British withdrawal, something which in his day still seemed remote, to bring it to the surface."[2]

1. *Dawn*, Karachi, 13-2-49.
2. Spear, P., *India, Pakistan, and the West* (Ist Ed), p. 191.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

CHAPTER 1

THE BACKGROUND

(712—1857)

WHEN the proposal for a separate Muslim state was put forward, the non-Muslims were startled. For those who had not kept in touch with the Muslim standpoint expressed normally in Urdu, and had taken for granted that on the departure of the British the majority community would inherit the whole of the subcontinent, it was a "bolt from the blue." Now, however, the truth is being realised. Observations of Morgan Phillips-Price have been quoted. Even the thoughtful Hindu writers have recognised that the demand for Pakistan had its roots in the past, and was the outcome of the unwillingness of the Hindus and the Muslims to make adjustments necessary for the evolution of a common nationhood. Dr. Sachin Sen, for example, says at the conclusion of his book, *The Birth of Pakistan*, "Indian soil was not well watered for the sprouting of secular, democratic nationalism. What was implicit was made explicit by Pakistan. It was a tragic phase of Indian national history that Pakistan was not basically an unnatural growth." (p. 196)

Muslim writers have, however, gone too far back into antiquity to trace the origin of the new state and some of them have even quoted Al-Biruni (d. 1050) to indicate the basis for Pakistan. It is true that the ground for Muslim separatism was prepared when Islam entered the subcontinent, and all efforts to provide a bridge between the Hindus and the Muslims failed. For practical purposes, however, the gradual crystallisation and realisation of the idea of Pakistan is related to the period of the British rule. During the Muslim rule some sort of *modus operandi* had been evolved. This proved impossible of achievement when democratic institutions were introduced and changes took place in the outlook of the two communities. This book is an account of the

failure of these efforts and the slow growth of separate Muslim nationhood for which a territorial base was found in the Muslim majority areas.

If one were asked to give a date for the beginning of modern Muslim separatism, it was probably 1869 when Syed Ahmed Khan, touched to the quick by the growing Hindu demand for replacement of Urdu by Hindi, grimly prophesied that the paths of the Hindus and the Muslims will separate. The letter in which this great realist has summed up the basis, the advantages and risks of Muslim separatism has been reproduced at length elsewhere, and gives not only the reasons which started the modern course of Muslim separatism but also contains a cool appraisal of the advantages and limitations of this course. After his grave decision Syed Ahmed who had been organising institutions hitherto for the common good of the Muslims and the Hindus—like the Moradabad School and the Scientific Society—felt that it was his duty to save the Muslim community and ensure that in the future it played a role which bore some relation to its past. This book is a study of the efforts which this great man and his successors made to attain this object. As, however, the activities of the promoters of the Hindi as well as of those who reacted sharply to this example of new Hindu resurgence had its roots in the past, a preliminary chapter is added to indicate the previous landmarks in the history of Hindu-Muslim relationship, and the gradual consolidation of separate Muslim nationhood. It has been sub-divided into two sections, one dealing with the period of Muslim supremacy and the other, with the transitional period, beginning with the death of Aurangzeb, the last of the great Mughuls, and ending in 1857, with the defeat and capture of the titular Mughul emperor Bahadur Shah.

I

(712—1707)

On a small scale, the contacts between the Hindus and the Muslims began on the coastline of the Indian subcontinent much earlier, but the two people came in large-scale and sustained

contact only after the Arab occupation of Sind in 712. Muhammad bin Qasim, the Arab conqueror, had to lay down the lines which were to govern their relationship and this he did in what is often referred to as the Brahmanabad Settlement, after the scene of the battle, which made him the master of the Lower Sind. He acted in a most liberal and statesmanlike manner. He gave the Hindus all the privileges which the Muslim jurists reserve for the People of the Book, and set up a precedent which, in spite of its doubtful legal authority, became the norm for the Muslim rule. The Arab conqueror went further. He seems to have entered into a sort of partnership under which the Arabs looked after the defence of the realm and its law and order, while the Hindu *Amils*, the traditional civil servants of the area, were in charge of the civil administration. Muhammad bin Qasim was an officer of the Omayyads, but when the Abbasids succeeded them in 850, not only were his administrative policies maintained but the Arab-Indian collaboration was extended to intellectual and cultural fields.

Sind provided the first substantial link between Islam and India, but the main entry of the Muslims in the subcontinent was through the north-western passes, the traditional route of invasion. Some 300 years after the Arab occupation of Sind, Ghazni, which had developed into a major political, military and cultural centre on the outskirts of the declining Abbasid empire, became the base of operations against the subcontinent. In 1020, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni (998-1030) annexed Lahore. As the southern parts were already under the Muslims, this annexation meant that by 1020 the areas which constitute West Pakistan today were under Muslim rule. The heritage of Ghazni in the realm of language, religious practices and law was even more important than that of Sind. The Ghaznavids introduced Persian which was to be the official and literary language during Muslim rule in India, vigorously patronised Sunni creed and promulgated Hanafi law. With occasional and minor departures, these features characterised Indian Islam and served as a binding force.

The conquest of Northern India was the work of Muhammad Ghauri (d. 1206) who came almost two centuries after Mahmud.

The original fabric of the Delhi Sultanate was built up by the patient, far-seeing and mild-mannered Iltutmash (1211-36). Its consolidation was due to the great administrative ability of Balban (1266-87) who dominated Northern India, first as an all-powerful noble and later as the king, for almost half a century. In his days the Mongol invasion was in full swing and the wise ruler concentrated on consolidation—to spare Delhi, as he said, the horrors which Baghdad suffered in 1258. Thanks to Iltutmash, Balban and Ala-ud-Din Khalji (1296-1316), India was spared those massacres, depredations and destruction of life and property which the Mongols perpetrated in the neighbouring countries of Central Asia. This was, however, not the period of cordial relations between the Hindus and the Muslims. For one thing, the grim situation created by the standing Mongol threat and their repeated incursions right up to Delhi necessitated strict and harsh measures. Moreover, the Muslim refugees, who had suffered so much at the hands of the non-Muslim Mongols in Central Asia could not be friendly to non-Muslims in their new homes. The Mongol invasion, however, indirectly contributed to the consolidation of the Muslim rule as it forced a number of Muslim administrators, soldiers, saints and scholars to seek refuge in the newly conquered territories.

The Sultanate was a period of grim struggle in the political and military sphere, but the arrival of a large number of saints, scholars and missionaries led to the expansion of Islam. This was largely the work of the Sufi missionaries, who not only spread Islam in the subcontinent but with their general piety and humanitarian approach provided a meeting ground between Hindu and Muslim seekers after God. Partly as a result of their efforts and example and partly owing to the basic situation within the subcontinent, many Hindu and Muslim saints came together giving rise to what is called the *Bhakti* movement. Many of its leaders like Kabir, Guru Nanak, and Dadu emphasised common features between Hinduism and Islam, but the commonly held view that *Bhakti* was entirely a syncretic movement is wrong. The numerous Hindu saints mentioned under the so-called *Bhakti* movement represent two distinct trends, similar to the later

tolerant, cosmopolitan, Brahmo Samaj and the militant Arya Samaj. Kabir, Nanak and Dadu represented the first group while Chaitanya and the later Sikh Gurus were spear-heads of Hindu revivalism. Chaitanya's followers made Mathura the centre of their revivalist activities and soon came in conflict with Muslim authorities.

In the meanwhile the Mughuls had occupied the throne of Delhi (1526) and Akbar (1566-1606) launched vigorous and sustained efforts to bring Hindus and Muslims together. His efforts in this direction cover three distinct phases. Almost from the beginning of his rule, he tried to secure the collaboration of the Rajput chiefs, gave them high administrative posts, promulgated the policy of '*Sulah Kul*' (Peace With All), honoured leaders of Hindu opinion, abolished *Jizyah*, discouraged the slaughter of cows and patronised Hindu arts like music and Hindi and Sanskrit literature. All this was achieved without offending Muslim opinion, as Akbar remained an orthodox and devout Muslim himself and Muslim religious leaders were still dominant at the court. The second phase began with the discussions of the *House of Worship*, built in 1575, in the course of which he became disgusted with the disputes and wranglings of Muslim religious leaders. He, now, antagonised Muslim opinion by sanctioning a number of practices against orthodox Islam and was commonly believed to be desirous of initiating a new religion. He actually started accepting disciples with a number of curious and un-Islamic practices. Whether this meant starting a new religion or initiating only a new spiritual order has been a matter of controversy. It is, however, certain that Akbar's ambition was to be "the spiritual guide" of all his subjects. The third phase of his reign, during which these activities practically ceased, may be said to begin with his estrangement with Abul Fazl in 1597 and the ascendency of the orthodox party at the court. This was also the period when Khwaja Baqi Billah (1563-1603) had arrived at the capital, with the gift of a new spiritual order—the *Naqshbandiya*—from the homelands of the Mughuls and with his piety, spiritual powers and adoption of the *Naqshbandiya* practice of influencing Muslim society by influencing the people on the top,

had brought within the circle of his admirers and helpers, the leading Muslim nobles at the court, like Khan-i-Azam Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, Shaikh Farid, the Paymaster-General and Qulich Khan, the Viceroy of Lahore.

Akbar's attempts at religious synthesis were a disastrous failure. They did not please the Hindus. The only Hindu of note who is recorded to have become a royal disciple was Birbal, regarded by succeeding generations as the court jester. Rajput nobles like Man Singh and Bhagwan Singh flatlyref used to accept the royal views. Muslims, on the other hand, were seriously offended.

Apart from the mistakes made by Akbar, his failure was due to the play of bigger forces. At this time a great Hindu religious revival was sweeping the country. Under Chaitaniya's successors Mathura had become a great centre of Hindu resurgence, where an elaborate programme of temple construction was under way. One of the biggest temples constructed at this time was built by Raja Man Singh himself. Possibly for this or another temple built at Mathura, the local Brahmans were bold enough to appropriate the material collected by the local Qazi for the construction of a mosque. Other incidents of this nature were happening elsewhere, and antagonising the Muslims.

Akbar's experiments in the religious field achieved nothing. On the other hand they led to a vigorous reaction under Hazrat Mujaddid Alif Sani (1564-1624). He had spent some years at Fatehpur Sikri, where he helped Faizi in the preparation of his commentary on the Quran but he violently differed from the views of Abul Fazl and was deeply hurt at the excesses of the Hindus and the low regard shown by a Muslim king to Islamic injunctions. He used his powerful pen and spiritual influence to lead a reaction against Akbar's policy. He urged reimposition of Jizyah, lifting of the ban on cow-killing and abrogation of various other measures taken by Akbar.

The Mujaddid is probably the most forceful religious personality in the history of Muslim India. He had received educa-

tion under prominent teachers at Sialkot and Sirhind, and had crossed swords with Abul Fazl and Faizi, the leading lights of Akbar's court. He, however, did not come into his own until at the ripe age of 40; he became a disciple of Khwaja Baqi Billah. While association with the Khwaja brought him in contact with leading Muslim nobles of the day, the spiritual training and personal encouragement which he received from his teacher greatly heightened the Mujaddid's spiritual gifts and led to an incredible freeing of his creative powers.

The Mujaddid was a widely-read scholar, and was the greatest rhetorician and stylist in an age which had produced Abul Fazl and Badauyni. He possessed extraordinary powers of inference and argument and had great moral courage. Even in his early days he had written against the philosophers and the Shias. Now, in a slightly more congenial reign of Jahangir, he used his powerful pen to denounce Akbar's policy, innovations and injunctions. In 1620 his courage was put to another test. He was called to Jahangir's court in connection with the orthodox objections to some of his writings. These writings were explained away, but he carried out in practice his denunciation of Akbar's un-Islamic practices by refusing to perform the deep obeisance ordered by him for all those who came into the royal presence. He was imprisoned but released after some time and passed away in 1624. After him his work was carried on by his descendants and numerous disciples.

No single individual opposed Akbar's policy so consistently and forcefully as the Mujaddid, and some recent writers begin the rise of Muslim separatism with him. There is no doubt that he was the spearhead of Muslim self-assertion and not only did he denounce un-Islamic practices, but, through his doctrine of *Wahdat-ul-Shuhud*, provided a positive, philosophical basis for his viewpoint. He, however, had his limitations. He became the spokesman of the Sunni Islam, but his view brought him into conflict not only with Akbar and the Hindus but also with the Shias. He held and preached that the Shias were heretics, deserving of capital punishment. This stand, in itself, made his

teachings an imperfect basis for Muslim nationhood in the sub-continent where Shias formed a sizeable and significant portion of the Muslim community. His other difficulty was that he was primarily a Sufi. He emphasised the importance of subordinating one's actions to the dictates of the *Shariat* but he described many mystic experiences of his own, to which strong exception was taken by the Ulama. Sheikh Abdul Haq Muhaddis, the leading theologian of the day, wrote a well-argued pamphlet against him, and his was not the only voice raised in criticism. When the Mujaddid was called to Jahangir's court the influence of a Shia Wazir may have been at work, but it has been recorded that the Ulama also had objected to certain remarks made by the Mujaddid and the relevant entries from his letters have been cited. Even more significant is the fact that in Aurangzeb's time, when the supremacy of Islamic law became more firmly established a number of *Fatwas* were issued against the Mujaddid's writings and, at one stage, orders were issued by Aurangzeb's Chief Qazi, banning the reading of his *Makhtubat.*[1]

Aurangzeb, whose guiding principle was to uphold Islamic law and to carry out the injunctions of the religious lawyers, at a late stage of his career banned the study of the *Maktubat*, but there is simple evidence to show that at an earlier date he was in close contact with the Mujaddid's descendants, had honoured many of them, and carried into practice many proposals of the Mujaddid.

Akbar's ill-conceived measures in the religious sphere had achieved nothing. On the other hand, they led to a reaction which undermined even the existing basis of harmony. This was facilitated by the failure of Dara Shukoh and the success of Aurangzeb in the war of succession to Shah Jahan. On ascending the throne, Aurangzeb (1658-1707) maintained Akbar's policy of giving Hindus a due place in administration, continued to patronise Hindi and Sanskrit literature by having a Hindi court-poet, but re-imposed *Jizyah* and abolished the ban on cow-killing.

1. Vide Khishgi, *Maaraj-ul-Wilayat* (MS. No. SH. MSS.—6281 of Panjab University Library), p. 617.

These developments widened the gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims but perhaps more effective in consolidating Muslim nationhood during this period was the sustained support which Aurangzeb gave to the Muslim educational institutions during his long reign of fifty years. The popular Islamic curriculum known as *Dars-i-Nizamia* was coming into being in his reign and the emperor was personally responsible for the grant of an extensive building known as Farangi Mahal of Lucknow to the family of Mulla Nizam-ud-Din, after whom the *Dars* is named. Aurangzeb made very large grants for the spread of education and the large-scale employment of Qazis in his reign offered lucrative openings to those who received proper education in Muslim institutions. He issued orders forbidding Muslims to attend educational institutions maintained by the Hindus. By the time Aurangzeb died, not only had the Muslim people gained a new self-confidence, but there was a large educated class which could maintain Islamic learning and provide the base for the great Islamic religious revival of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries.

II

(1707—1857)

Aurangzeb died in 1707, and in less than fifteen years the prestige of the Mughul monarchy had reached its nadir. Even during the lifetime of the great emperor the military weakness of the Mughuls had become manifest. He spent twenty-five arduous years in the Deccan, without decisively solving the Marhatta problem. A single fort like Jinji would take seven years to capture. Aurangzeb's ability, determination and prestige held the Marhattas in check, but even before he closed his eyes their roving bands caused havoc and spread consternation deep in the Mughul empire.

After Aurangzeb's death the pace of disintegration became precipitate. The years 1716 to 1719 saw three puppet kings succeed one another on the throne, at the pleasure of the Syed Brothers. In 1739 Nadir looted Delhi and massacred its inhabitants. In 1757 the battle of Plassey was fought and a rich fruitful

province came under the sway of the East India Company. Seven years later the Mughul Emperor and the Nawab Wazir of Oudh were defeated at Buxar. By the end of the century Ranjit Singh had occupied Lahore, and Madhuji Sindhia was supreme at Delhi. Attempts made by Hyder Ali and Tipu to reverse the trend of events in the South failed in spite of their bravery, ability and resourcefulness.

The same process of disintegration was visible in the life of the community. This was the worst period in Shia-Sunni relationship. Aurangzeb had striven hard to sustain Sunni orthodoxy but his son and successor made a resolute attempt to turn his empire into a Shia kingdom. In 1712 he ordered the Commander of Artillery to recite Shia formula during Friday prayers from the pulpit of Badshahi mosque of Lahore. This was successfully resisted by the local public and the Pathan soldiers who thronged the streets. There were riots elsewhere—e.g. at Ahmadabad—and the attempt was abandoned, but the eighteenth century remained a period of acute Shia-Sunni conflict. Not only did this lead to assassinations—including that of Mirza Mazhar Jan-i-Janan, a famous saint and poet—but the feud greatly weakened Muslim solidarity and became a serious factor undermining unity of action at crucial stages. It is true that it normally remained below the surface, and the divisions were not hard and fast. It is also true that the Muslims generally closed their ranks against a common non-Muslim enemy, but these divisions remained serious during the eighteenth century. Dr. Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi goes so far as to say, "It was natural that a tradition should grow up of cooperation between the Shiahs and the Hindus against the major section of the Muslim community."[1] Elsewhere, dealing with the situation after the death of Aurangzeb, he says, "The rift between the Shiahs and the Sunnis increased, until it was impossible to hope for a concerted attack upon anarchy... The Shiahs were unable to see that it was the power of Islam and not only that of orthodoxy which was at stake ..."[2] One may not wholly agree

1. Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent*, p. 189.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

with this assessment, but it has to be recognised that in the eighteenth century, Shia-Sunni differences were a serious factor, and though generally below the surface, and often thinly disguised as Irani-Turani dispute, were on some important occasions—*e.g.* during the conflict of Safdar Jang with the Mughul king—pretty obvious and proved disastrous.

Politically, the eighteenth century remained a period of defeat and disintegration, but in the cultural and religious spheres it was a time of reconstruction. This was the period when Muslim educational system was standardised and generally adopted over the subcontinent. This period also saw the rapid rise of Urdu to the level of a literary language, capable of giving expression to the thoughts, feelings and learning of Muslim India. Both these developments made for unification and consolidation of the Muslim society.

Even more important was the work of Shah Wali Ullah (1703-1761) whom President Ayub called in a speech, delivered at Balakot, "the Father of Modern Muslim India." Son of a distinguished scholar who had participated in the compilation of the famous *Fatawa-i-Alamgiri*, he was born four years before the death of Aurangzeb. He was educated by his father, and later completed his studies in Hejaz. When he was still abroad, he was receiving reports of chaotic conditions back home and was advised to stay on in Arabia. He spurned this advice and returned home to take up the task of spiritual regeneration and consolidation. In the course of a well-regulated life, he completed a whole library of books on various branches of Islamic thought, beliefs and learning, which were well suited to the religious needs of the subcontinent and marked the beginning of a new era. He translated the Holy Quran into Persian and wrote learned works on *Hadith*, but perhaps his biggest contribution to the religious life of the community was the now open but catholic point of view which he brought to the study of various subjects. The revivalism of the Mujaddid has given a new life to Islam, but a broader and more realistic approach was needed to form the basis on which various conflicting groups—the Sufi and the Mulla, the Shia and the Sunni, the Hanafi and

the Hanbali—could agree. Shah Wali Ullah averred that "*'adl* (justice, balance) was the primal virtue, and the basis of all civilised existence." By making *'adl* his lodestar in the study of controversies, he put forward a point of view from which only the extremists could differ. In particular, he worked hard and wrote numerous bulky volumes to bring Shia-Sunni dispute to a level where they would cease to be a menace to the corporate life of Muslim India. He ably expounded and defended the Sunni point of view but, unlike the Mujaddid who held Shias to be *Kafir* and deserving of capital punishment, he adopted a far more liberal attitude towards them. He also stood for reform in social customs, beliefs and practices but warned against cutting oneself adrift from the Muslim society and becoming an ineffectual angel beating one's wings in the void.

Shah Wali Ullah's work was carried on by four gifted sons and a host of disciples and pupils. His sons produced two Urdu versions of the Holy Quran and adopted other progressive measures, but like their father did not break away from the community in their enthusiasm for reform and radicalism. The most influential of Shah Wali Ullah's sons was Shah Abdul Aziz, who refused an offer of appointment at Calcutta Madrassa and devoted fifty years of a dedicated life to give solace and spiritual guidance to Muslim India. In his views he was less venturous than his illustrious father, but he gave moral support to his famous disciple Syed Ahmed Brelvi, nephew Shah Ismail Shaheed and son in-law Abdul Hai who toured all over Northern India to carry the message of Islamic revival and social reform, and ultimately led the unsuccessful *Jihad* against the Sikhs in the north-west. The *Jihad* failed but the enthusiasm which was generated was not confined to Delhi. Syed Ahmed Brelvi and his two distinguished companions had spent several months at Calcutta on the way to and from the holy places, and not the least important result of the movement was the link which it established between Northern India and Muslim Bengal. After the battle of Plassey, Bengal, which even otherwise was somewhat isolated, had become cut off from the centres of Islamic learning in Northern India. This isolation was ended by the Bengali disciples of Syed Ahmed

Brelvi—like Sufi Noor Ahmed of Chittagong and Maulvi Imam-ud-Din of Nawakhali—and his other Khalifas like Maulvi Inayat Ali of Patna and Maulvi Karamat Ali of Jaunpur, who spent long years of missionary work in what is now East Pakistan. Not only did their activities bring about a new Islamic regeneration in the area, which incidentally provided a large number of recruits for *Jihad* in the north-west, but by linking Muslim Bengal with Northern India provided that cohesion in the Muslim community which a century later was to be reflected in the two areas being grouped together in the independent state of Pakistan.



Hon'ble Dr. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan Bahadur, K.C.S.I., LL.D.

(p. 15)

CHAPTER 2

SYED AHMED KHAN

(1817—1898)

I

ON 30 May, 1871, Lord Mayo, the Viceroy of India, who was getting a little concerned about the continuous, violent manifestations of Muslim discontent with the British rule, asked a distinguished Civil Servant to study the problem, analyse the causes of the discontent and suggest remedies. That was the genesis of Dr. Sir William Hunter's *Our Indian Musalmans ; are they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen ?*

Hunter's book was limited in its objective, and written from an obviously imperialistic angle. It is, however, a mine of illuminative information on the position which Muslim India had reached within fourteen years of the unsuccessful War of Independence, and as this was also the time when Syed Ahmed returned from England, with his ambitious schemes for the uplift of his people, we shall consider in detail, some of its facts and figures. Dr. Hunter's thesis was that if Government wished to avoid the endless repetition of "Wahabi murders," and the enormous expenditure of annual military campaigns against the "Fanatics' Colony" on the Frontier, it must remove that "chronic sense of wrong, which has grown up in the hearts of the Musalmans under British rule."

That this "chronic sense of wrong" had a solid basis, was shown by Dr. Hunter with an array of facts and figures regarding Bengal, which he knew intimately. First he dealt with the Muslim land-owning classes of the Eastern Bengal. He wrote :

"At Murshidabad a Muhammadan Court still plays its farce of mimic state, and in every District, the descendant of some line of princes sullenly and proudly eats his heart out among roofless palaces and weed-choked tanks. Of such families I have personally known several. Their houses swarm with grown-up sons and daughters, with grandchildren and nephews and nieces, and not one of the hungry crowd has a chance of doing anything for himself in life. They drag on a listless existence in patched-up verandas or leaky outhouses, sinking deeper and deeper into a hopeless abyss of debt, till the neighbouring Hindu money-lender fixes a quarrel on them, and then in a moment a host of mortgages foreclose, and the ancient Musalman family is suddenly swallowed up and disappears for ever."[1]

After describing very vividly and at great length the ruin of the Muslim landed aristocracy, Hunter tersely remarks :

"If any statesman wishes to make a sensation in the House of Commons, he has only to truly narrate the history of these Muhammadan families of Bengal."[2]

Next, Hunter considers the position of Muslims in public services, which ever since the Muslims came to India (and either neglected trade and industry or found themselves powerless against the all-powerful Hindu caste-guilds) had been the principal means of livelihood for the educated Muslims. Of course, the higher posts in the Army—formerly a close preserve of the Muslims—were now denied to all Indians but even in other spheres of public employment, the share of Muslims bore no relation either to their population or their historical traditions. Hunter first deals with the proportion of the Muslims in the Judicial and the Revenue services, which in different grades varied from one-fourth to one-tenth and goes on to say :

"It is, however, in the less conspicuous Departments, in which the distribution of patronage is less keenly watched by the

1. Hunter, W. W., *Our India Musalmans* (First Edition) p. 152.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 154.

political parties in Bengal, that we may read the fate of the Muslamans. In 1869 these departments were filled thus: In the three grades of Assistant Government Engineers there were fourteen Hindus and not one Musalman; among the apprentices there were four Hindus and two Englishmen, and not one Musalman. Among the sub-Engineers, there were twenty-four Hindus to one Musalman; among the Overseers, two Musalmans to sixty-three Hindus. In the Office of Accounts, there were fifty names of Hindus, and not one Musalman, and in the Upper Subordinate Department, there were twenty-two Hindus, and again not one Musalman."[1]

He similarly surveyed the professions of Law and Medicine, which revealed an equally depressing position, and after giving a table showing "Distribution of state patronage in Bengal" in April 1871, he went on to say:

"In one extensive Department the other day, it was discovered that there was not a single employee who could read the Musalman dialect; and, in fact, there is now scarcely a Government office in Calcutta in which a Muhammadan can hope for any post above the rank of a porter, messenger, filler of inkpots and mender of pens."[2]

Hunter next deals with the causes of this state of affairs. He pays a high tribute to the Hindu intellect, but adds that "an universal and immeasurable superiority on the part of the Hindus, such as would be required to explain their monopoly of official preferment, is unknown at the present day, and is in direct contradiction to their past history."[3] As a matter of fact, he adds, "the truth is, that when the country passed under our rule, the Musalmans were the superior race, and superior not only in stoutness of heart and strength of arm, but in power of political organization and in the science of political government."[4] Muslims held their own even in the intellectual sphere. "Before the country passed to us, they were not only the political, but the

1. Hunter, W. W., *Our Indian Musalmans* (First Ed.), p. 166.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 167. 3. *Ibid.* 4. *Ibid.*, pp. 167-68.

intellectual power in India."[1] Muslim backwardness was, therefore, not due to any inherent inferiority of the community but could be traced to historical causes, which had blocked their progress. Hunter described them all, including their neglect of modern education—"Some years ago . . . out of three hundred boys in the English College (Calcutta), not one per cent were Muslims"—but he also pointed out, as clearly, as a Government servant could do with propriety, that the policy, which the British Government had followed towards the Muslims, was one of the principal causes of turning the scales against them. He gives a quotation from a Persian newspaper of Calcutta, which would be a revelation to those who today criticise the principle of reservation of posts for Muslims:

"All sorts of employment, great and small, are being gradually snatched away from the Muhammadans, and bestowed on men of other races, particularly the Hindus. The Government is bound to look upon all classes of its subjects with an equal eye; yet the time has now come when it *publicly* singles out the Muhammadans in its Gazette for exclusion from official posts. Recently, when several vacancies occurred in the office of the Sunderbans Commissioner, that official, in advertising them in the Government Gazette, stated that the appointments would be given to none but the Hindus."[2]

Hunter's facts and figures were mainly for Bengal, but the position in other parts of the country was similar. He, himself, quotes from a petition submitted by Muslims of Orissa to the Commissioner of the Division, which, though worded in stilted phraseology, gave an indication of the Muslim position in that part of the country:

"Truly speaking, the Orissa Muhammadans have been levelled down and down, with no hopes of rising again. Born of noble parentage, poor by profession, and destitute of patrons, we find ourselves in the position of a fish out of water . . . We would travel into the remotest corners of the earth, ascend the snowy

1. Hunter, W. W., *Our Indian Musalmans* (First Ed.), p. 175.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 172.

peaks of Humalayas, wander the forlorn regions of Siberia, could we be convinced that by so travelling we would be blessed with a Government appointment of ten shillings a week." [1]

The Communal Triangle in India written by the Indian socialist leaders, Asoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan throws further light on the status enjoyed by Muslims in public offices at this time. We quote a paragraph, on which comment will be futile:

"Not only were the Muslims economically crushed, but educationally and socially also their position was deliberately depressed by the Government. In 1870, the Muhammadan pleaders presented two memorials to the High Court pointing out that while closed days allowed to the Christians were sixty-two, and those to Hindus fifty-two, only eleven were granted to the Muhammadans. The petition was called forth by an order that the 'Native holidays' observed by the High Court should be the same as allowed in the Government offices. In the Government offices, no Muhammadan holiday was sanctioned at all." [2]

II

The man, who faced the situation, of which we get a glimpse in Hunter's book, was born in 1817. His forefathers, like so many other statesmen and warriors, who gavestability and grandeur to the edifice of Islam in India, came from Iran. Some of Syed Ahmed Khan's ancestors distinguished themselves on the battlefield, but having descended from the Holy Prophet, they had claims to spiritual sanctity also. Syed Ahmed's grandfather, who originally held a military command, was later on given a quasi-religious-quasi-judicial appointment by the Mughal Emperor.

Syed Ahmed's father, whose name was Mir Muttaqi, was a religious recluse but, on account of his noble descent, wielded great influence and was held in particular esteem by the contempo-

1. Hunter, W. W., *Our Indian Musalmans* (First Ed.), p. 173.
2. Asoka Mehta, *The Communal Triangle in India*, pp. 86-87.

rary Mughal King, Akbar Shah II. Of him, very little is known, except that he was a carefree, outspoken individual, well-versed in archery and swimming, and very intimate with Shah Ghulam Ali Naqshbandi Mujaddidi, a local saint of great eminence. When, on his father's death, Mir Muttaqi was offered the ancestral rank and titles, he politely declined them as being nothing more than an empty show in the existing state of the Mughal decay.

Shah Ghulam Ali, with whom Syed Ahmed's father was very friendly, was at that time the principal saint of the Mujaddidi order. This religious order, which is an Indian offshoot of the main sect of Naqshbandis, originated with Shaikh Ahmed of Sirhind, who in the seventeenth century led the orthodox reaction against religious innovations of the Mughal Emperor, Akbar and who was known by his followers as the great Mujaddid (the Reviver of Faith). Mujaddidis, from the very nature of their origin, have been strict Muslims, and until Wahabism from Arabia began to absorb and supersede them, were the puritans of Indian Islam. Shah Ghulam Ali, who was at the head of this order in Syed Ahmed's infancy was deeply attached to Mir Muttaqi and his family. As a matter of fact, the saint, who had no children, used to say that Mir Muttaqi's sons were like his own children and they also addressed him as "Dada Hazrat" (Grandfather Saint). When Syed Ahmed was born, his father took him to the saint, who named him Ahmed, and when the child grew to a school-going age, he was first brought to Shah Ghulam Ali, who taught him the Arabic alphabet. In his childhood, Syed Ahmed was frequently taken by his father to the saint, who showed great fondness for the boy and cheerfully put up with all the childish pranks of the exuberant child.

In the deeply religious atmosphere, surrounding his father and the "Grandfather Saint," Shah Ghulam Ali, the child developed that deep devotion to religion which marked him throughout his life. For his insight into the affairs of the state and first contacts with Western learning and civilisation he was indebted to his maternal grandfather, Khwaja Farid-ud-Din, who was, for eight years, Prime Minister at the Mughal Court. Khwaja Farid,

whose influence during the formative years of Syed Ahmed can hardly be over-emphasised, was a remarkable man in many ways. He was the foremost mathematician amongst Indian Muslims of his day, and was equally at home in practical affairs of the state. Born at Delhi, he completed his education at Lucknow and soon thereafter was appointed as Superintendent of the Madrasah (College), established by Warren Hastings in Calcutta. Later he was selected for responsible political offices by the East India Company. In 1799, he accompanied, as an Attache, the embassy sent by Lord Wellesly to Persia and was later, Political Officer and Agent at the Court of the Burmese King. In 1815, he left Calcutta to take up the Ministership, offered to him by Akbar Shah II. He brought to the service of the titular Mughal Emperor, all the experience he had gathered in the service of the East India Company, and worked assiduously to reorganise the finances of the Royal household. Unluckily the economies which he effected were unpopular, and after some time, he had to relinquish his office. He was, however, recalled to service, and had another spell of office for more than three years.

Khwaja Farid died during Syed Ahmed's childhood, but the influence which he exercised in moulding the habits and character of his illustrious grandson was far from meagre. As Syed Ahmed's father was a religious recluse, he and his mother lived at the house of his maternal grandfather, and the observant child saw, from very close quarters, the daily life and social and political background of a Mughal minister. He later wrote a biography of Khwaja Farid, which not only shows the profound regard which he felt for his grandfather, but gives a glimpse of the happy but disciplined and catholic atmosphere in which Syed Ahmed spent his early days.

Details of Syed Ahmed's childhood have not been preserved, but from what is on record it is easy to see that his intellectual powers developed very slowly, and in his childhood and youth, he was more marked for a robust physique and an active outdoor life than for any intellectual precocity. When his grandfather saw him some time after his birth and noticed his unusually large

hands and feet, he remarked, "A Jat (burly rustic) has been born in our family !" The manly games in which Syed Ahmed took an active part in his early days strengthened his physique, but luckily his education was not altogether neglected. The education, which Syed Ahmed received in his early days was not very thorough or systematic, but under the guidance of a very wise mother, he received an adequate knowledge of the rudiments of subjects taught at Muslim madrassas of the day. What is more, he developed that real love of learning which enabled him to supplement so fully the knowledge which he gained in early days, and became, in the course of time, not only the political but also the intellectual leader of his people.

III

Syed Ahmed's early days were spent in comfort, but, with the death of his grandfather, the family's fortunes began to decline, and when, in 1838, his father died, and the stipends and Jagirs, which were allotted to him by his Royal patron either lapsed or were reduced, the young Syed had to seek his livelihood. At first he had to content himself with a minor clerical appointment, but he soon qualified himself for the post of a Munsif (Sub-Judge) and in 1841 was posted in that capacity at the historic town of Fatehpur Sikri.

In 1846, Syed Ahmed's elder brother died and, in order to be able to look after the family affairs, he asked for a transfer to Delhi, where he remained from 1846 to 1854. These eight years are of great importance in his life. For one thing, he was able to complete his education and, for another, he saw, not through the misty hues of childhood, but with the mature vision of a grown-up youth, the Indian summer of old Delhi. At that time the Mughal rule had ceased to exist, except in name, but the Mughal capital was even now attracting the most gifted Muslims of India. In the tawdry court of a titular King, Ghalib sang verses, which easily excelled everything written by the poet laureates of Akbar and Shah Jahan, and on the steps of the Jami'-Masjid, the successors of Shah Wali Ullah and Shah Ismail Shaheed kept aloft the

torch of religious learning and social reform. Even in houses of unemployed and decaying nobility could be found administrators, like Nawab Ahmed Bakhsh and Nawab Amin-ud-Din of Loharu and cultured philanthropists like Hakim Mahmud Khan and Nawab Mustafa Khan, who in more prosperous times could have easily steered the ship of a powerful state. Syed Ahmed moved amongst them—he was one of them in every way—and the affection which he inspired amongst his elders may be judged from a remark of Ghalib, who after praising Syed Ahmed's sagacity and abilities, adds :

"To me, he is like one of my own kith and kin."

Syed Ahmed drank deeply of this elevating atmosphere and his first sizable literary effort was a tribute to Delhi—*Asar-ul-Sanadid* or the "Antiquities of Delhi"—which he brought out in 1847. In this book, after patient and laborious research, carried on not so much in the cool comfort of a library, as amidst the moss-covered. illegible inscriptions of half-ruined structures (which at that time had no Archaeological Department to look after them), Syed Ahmed prepared an account of the principal buildings in and around Delhi. The young author was no trained archaeologist and, after the lapse of a century, his work has been naturally superseded by more systematic accounts, but even now the historian turns with gratitude to this pioneer effort, especially as some of the buildings described in the book were destroyed during and after the Revolt of 1857, and we only know them through the description left by Syed Ahmed. Of equal interest is the chapter on "Celebrities of Contemporary Delhi" which, though written in the stilted, verbose style, popular amongst Persian and Urdu writers of the day, is probably the best account of literary, religious and artistic life during the Indian summer of the Mughal Delhi.

Syed Ahmed's other literary efforts during his stay at Delhi were of a polemic nature. At this time a fierce controversy was raging between the new sect of Wahabis and the orthodox Muslims. Syed Ahmed, who was brought up in circles close to

the puritanical Shah Ghulam Ali, took part in these controversies and wrote a number of pamphlets in support of the Wahabi cause. His interest in bigger religious questions increased in course of time, but luckily he soon got out of the petty sectarian polemics—for the time being. to worship again at the shrine of the Muse of History. In 1855, he was transferred to Bijnore and here he commenced the editing and publication of the principal works on the history of Muslim rule in India. The first book he edited and published was *Ain-i-Akbari*, by Abul Fazl, the secretary and "friend, philosopher and guide" of Emperor Akbar. To this he later added the autobiography of Jahangir and Zia-ud-Din Barani's masterly study of the early Muslim rulers of Delhi. Syed Ahmed's work as a historian suffers from the slips which are inevitable in the work of a busy Government official, who tries to do another wholetime job, but it was well planned and generally of a high level. In course of time, its worth was duly recognised by foreign scholars. M. Garcin de Tassy published, in 1861, a French translation of the book on the archaeological history of Delhi and, three years later, Syed Ahmed was elected an honorary Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society of London.

IV

In 1857, Syed Ahmed Khan was forty. He had spent nearly twenty years in judicial service, was known as a just, competent Government official, who was interested in the general welfare of the people, and who spent his leisure in scholarly pursuits. In 1857, however, a new facet of his many-sided personality was revealed. This year a great political conflagration, which began with the mutiny of some units of the Indian Army and later spread to the civil population, started and it became inevitable even for ordinary law-abiding citizens to take sides in a sanguinary conflict.

Syed Ahmed Khan was at that time a Sub-Judge at Bijnore, but owing to his general versatility and competence, he wielded much bigger influence than is normally the share of a subordinate judicial officer. The Collector and Magistrate of the district,

Shakespeare, thought very highly of him, and in view of his general interest in public welfare had entrusted to him the supervision of those activities, like public health, which later came to be entrusted to city municipalities.

When the news of Revolt (and massacre of Europeans) at Delhi reached Bijnore, the local European officers and their families were naturally perturbed. Syed Ahmed Khan, however, reassured them and promised to save them even at the risk of his life. Soon this promise (and all the capacity he possessed for handling men) were to be put to a test. Before long a big mob, headed by Nawab Mahmud Khan, began to assemble and threaten the Europeans, who had taken refuge in the Collector's bungalow, and it appeared likely that the refugees here would suffer the same fate which Europeans had met in many other places in Northern India. Seeing the position deteriorate, Syed Ahmed decided to beard the lion in his den. Unarmed and without any escort, he faced the angry mob and approached their leader. Using all the influence which he could command, as a Syed, as a writer on religious subjects and as a trusted and esteemed public servant, he tried to convince Nawab Mahmud Khan that it was in his interest to allow the Europeans to evacuate unmolested. He was so successful in his plucky mission that the Nawab accompanied him to the Collector's bungalow, and a document was drawn up according to which the Europeans left the place in safety and the territory was taken over by the Nawab. Later, however, the local Hindu zamindars rose against the Nawab and when the situation became confused, the Commissioner of Meerut Division asked Syed Ahmed to take over as the Administrator of the district. He played this role for some time; but ultimately the situation became too disturbed for peaceful administration and he had to leave the place and take shelter at Meerut.

The events at Bijnore gave Syed Ahmed Khan an opportunity to show his capacity for handling men but the bigger Revolt in the whole country first gave him the scope for showing those qualities of statesmanship, fearlessness and supreme political

insight which he had inherited from his grandfather. As soon as order was restored after the Great Revolt, and even before its embers had fully died down, he wrote a book on *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*, which occupies a unique place in Indian political literature.

During the last fifty years, literature on Indian question has grown enormously and some able and courageous books have been written on the subject. In most cases, however, they are the work of those who have had full access to the political literature in English and have been largely inspired by the doctrines of Mill, Burke, Karl Marx and other Western thinkers. Syed Ahmed's book offers home-brewed vintage. He was ignorant of English or any other Western language and his book is noteworthy as embodying the political wisdom of a well-informed Muslim who was unacquainted with the modern political thought but who was a true heir to the traditions of Mughal statesmanship.

Even more remarkable is the courage and fearlessness of the author. The book was written when the greater part of the country was yet under Martial Law. The Anglo-Indian Press was advocating " a very firm line " and the public opinion in England and in official circles in India had been deeply aroused. To criticise Government at a time like this was to play with fire. Syed Ahmed's book is, however, a scathing criticism of the previous pattern of administration and offers a full explanation, if not a vindication of the Indian Revolt.

Accorning to Syed Ahmed Khan, the basic cause, which ultimately led to the Great Revolt, was the absence of any Indian representing the Indian point of view, in the upper councils governing the country. He said :

" Most men agree . . . that it is highly conducive to the welfare and prosperity of Government—indeed, it is essential to its stability—that the people should have a voice in its councils." [1]

1. Quoted in Graham's *Life of Syed Ahmed Khan* (2nd Ed.), p. 26.

He waxed eloquent over the evils which resulted from the exclusion of Indians from the Legislative Council of India, and the ignorance of that body from the true Indian point of view. He wrote:

"[In the period preceding the Indian Revolt] Government could never know the inadvisability of the laws and regulations which it passed. It could never hear, as it ought to have heard, the voice of the people on such a subject. The people had no means of protesting against what they might feel to be a foolish measure, or of giving public expression to their own wishes." [1]

Next he referred to official interference in religion:

"There is not the smallest doubt that all men, whether ignorant or well-informed, whether high or low, had a firm conviction that the English Government was bent on interfering with their religion and their old-established customs." [2]

Recounting the many causes which led to this belief he stated:

"(It was thought) that Government and the officers of Government throughout the country were in the habit of giving large sums of money to the missionaries, with the intention of covering their expenses, enabling them to distribute books, and in every way aiding them. Many covenanted officers and many military men have been in the habit of talking to their subordinates about religion; some of them would bid their servants come to their house and listen to the preaching of missionaries." [3]

Syed Ahmed strongly criticised the laws providing for the resumption of revenue-free lands granted by the previous Governments, as "most obnoxious." He said:

"The people said that Government not only did nothing for

1. Quoted in Graham, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

them itself, but undid what former governments had done."[1]

He also complained about the lack of social intercourse between the British and the Indian sections of the public. "There was no real communication between the governors and governed, no living together or near one another, as has always been the custom of the Mohammadans, in countries which they subjected to their rule."[2] He made it clear that "it was for Government to try and win the friendship of its subjects, not for the subjects to try and win that of the Government."[3] He added: "Now the English Government has been in existence upwards of a century, and up to the present hour it has not secured the affections of the people."[4]

He even criticised the handling of the mutineers at Meerut. They were brave people who had served the East India Company loyally, had won medals and decorations, and refused to bite the cartridges, (the biting of which would have "destroyed their castes") because they thought that this "was no crime at all." They were, however, "punished in a manner which thinking men know to have been most wrong and most inopportune."[5] He further adds:

"The prisoners, on seeing their hands and feet manacled, looked at their medals and wept. They remembered their services and thought how they had been recompensed!"

Syed Ahmed Khan had written a fearless—almost a dangerous—book, but the political sagacity which enabled him to put his finger on the defects of the administration also saved him from the consequences of his act. When the book was translated into English and discussed in the Viceroy's Council, Cecil Beadon, the Foreign Secretary, characterised it as "highly seditious," and recommended that the author should be duly punished. As, however, the Viceroy and other members were

1. Quoted in Graham, *op cit.*, p. 33.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 35. 4. *Ibid.*, p. 36. 5. *Ibid.*, pp. 38, 39.

convinced of the bona fides of Syed Ahmed Khan, no action was taken but what really silenced Beadon's fears was the knowledge that not a single copy of the book had been sold to the public in India! It was written, not to incite the people against the Government, but to acquaint the Government with the hardships which people were suffering, and so with the exception of a few copies which he retained himself, Syed Ahmed Khan sent all other copies to the Secretary of State for India, Members of Parliament, and high officials at Delhi and Calcutta.

The first published English translation of the book was prepared in 1873 by Sir Auckland Colvin (later Lieutenant-Governor of U.P.) and Major-General Graham, but, of course, English versions were prepared for official use much earlier. In the India Office, the book was translated, noted upon, discussed and became the starting point for many reforms, *e.g.*, the appointment of Indians to the Legislative Council, which began almost within a year of the publication of the book.

An interesting anecdote about the book has been narrated by Sahibzada Aftab Ahmed Khan, later a member of the Council of Secretary of State for India. When he was studying in England, he met Allan Octavian Hume, the founder of the Indian National Congress, who was a great admirer of Syed Ahmed Khan, but was puzzled by his opposition to the Congress.

Recalling this, Aftab Ahmed Khan said in the course of his Presidential Address at the All-India Muslim Educational Conference held at Aligarh in 1933, "I also wish to mention that when, in 1892, I had an occasion to meet in London late Mr. A. O. Hume, the founder of the Indian National Congress, he said to me that it was the influence of Sir Syed's book, *Causes of the Indian Revolt*, which led me to think of establishing an organization like the Indian National Congress."[1] (Translated from Urdu) *The Aligarh Institute Gazette* gives a more elaborate account of the interview which is of considerable interest to the historian

1. *Khutbat-i-Alia*, 1928, Aligarh, p. 137.

of the Indian National Congress as well as the biographers of Syed Ahmed Khan. According to this version, Hume said to Sahibzada Sahib, "It was after reading Syed Ahmed's book on the *Causes of the Indian Revolt* that I first felt the need for having a forum of public opinion in India, and eventually the Indian National Congress came into existence. But the amazing thing is that when it was started, Syed was the first to oppose it."[1] (Translated from Urdu)

Events of 1857-58 constituted a great national tragedy, but to judge by all appearances, Syed Ahmed himself had not fared badly. He emerged out of the conflict without doing anything which could cause him remorse, either as a loyal Government servant or as a patriotic Indian. The Revolt had also provided him with an opportunity to write a book, which at once brought him into the front rank of the leaders of Indian opinion. Apparently, Syed Ahmed himself had not been affected adversely by the course of events, but if we study his speeches and writings of this period, we feel that this was the greatest blow he ever suffered. His sorrow and anguish was unlimited. The grief turned his hair prematurely grey, and completely changed the course of his life.

The reasons for this intense and sharp reaction were twofold —both personal and national. Syed Ahmed himself was unhurt, but his near and dear ones had suffered terribly during the reprisals, which the British encouraged or countenanced after the fall of Delhi. His mother was at the Mughal capital during the disturbances, and when he went to visit her after the British occupation of the city, heart-breaking sight met his eyes:

" On reaching his house, he heard that his mother had taken refuge in one of her syce's (horse-attendant's) houses and he followed her there. On his calling out to her, she opened the door, crying: 'Why have you come here ? All are being killed.

1. Vide *The Aligarh Institute Gazette*, quoted in *Mussalmanon ka Roshan Mustaqbil* by Syed Tufail Ahmed, p. 286.

You will be killed also.' He told her not to be afraid, as he had a special pass. He then found out that for five days she had been living on the horses' grain and was very weak. For three days she had had no water." [1] He took his mother back with him to Meerut, but what she had undergone was too much for her and in spite of the best medical assistance she died within a month. "Syed Ahmed's uncle and cousin, whose house adjoined his at Delhi, were slain unarmed by the infuriated Sikhs three days after the assault." Graham who has recorded all this adds: "They were as loyal as Syed Ahmed himself; but at that dreadful time many innocent men, I grieve to say, suffered for the sins of the guilty."

Syed Ahmed's personal loss was heavy, but when he saw what the Muslim community had suffered, his grief was inconsolable. In the indiscriminate massacre, arson and loot, which followed the British occupation of the city, Delhi, which Syed Ahmed had known so well and loved so tenderly, simply ceased to exist. The British quarrel was really with the mutineers and their comrades in arms, but partly to strike terror in the minds of Indians in general, and partly out of anger at the mad massacre of European women and children at the hands of the mutineers, the authorities unleashed the dogs of war on the vast civil population of the city. Besides, in order to enlist the support of the Sikh soldiery, the Punjab officials had by narrating legendary tales stirred their religious zeal to the white heat of fanaticism and, in this hypnotised state, the Sikh soldiers committed atrocities which were more revolting than even those committed by the angry British soldiers. What Delhi suffered in these conditions is hard to describe, but easy to imagine. Not a house was safe; not a human being was secure. For several days after the British occupation of Delhi, civilians were shot at sight and when this was over, trials under the Martial Law started and any wretch, who had a grievance against another or who wanted to win the favour of the victors, would come forward with accusation of complicity against the best and the noblest, and

1. Graham, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

was readily believed. All the celebrities of Delhi, whom Syed Ahmed had described in his *Asar-ul-Sanadid*, were dead or were hiding to save their lives. The vast quarter of the city between the Fort and the grand mosque, which housed the Mughal aristocracy, was completely razed to the ground and ploughed up. The grand mosque of Shah Jahan was taken over by the army, and the Anglo-Indian Press was freely debating whether it should be destroyed or converted into a church!

Syed Ahmed's grief at what he saw was boundless. He felt that India was no place for a self-respecting Muslim and wanted to retire from service and settle in Egypt. About this time, Shakespeare, whose life he had saved at Bijnore, wanted to recommend him for the grant of the taluka of Chandpur. Syed Ahmed, however, refused to be enriched by the grant of a taluka, which had been forfeited as punishment to a Muslim talukdar, and informed Shakespeare that he did not want to stay in India. Recalling those fearful days he later stated in a public speech:

"At that time I did not believe that my people would regain even something of their prosperity, and I could not bear to see the condition, in which they were at that time . . . Believe me, this grief aged me and my hair turned grey."

Luckily Syed Ahmed did not yield to the counsel of despair, and realising that "it would be an act of cowardice and selfishness to seek a haven of peace when one's people were in a desperate condition," he gave up the idea of migration from India, and chose the stony path of a hard struggle and patient, assiduous labour.

He pondered over the tragedy which had overtaken his country and came to the conclusion that it was caused by ignorance. He, therefore, set himself to the task of educating both the ruler and the ruled, and removing the causes of possible friction and misunderstanding. The first task he had commenced with his *Causes of the Indian Revolt*, and he continued it throughout his life by a courageous representation of the viewpoint of

his countrymen.

For this purpose, in 1866, he organised a British India Association at Aligarh which an Indian political scientist has described as "the forerunner of the Congress."[1] The object of this organisation was to make known the grievances and the point of view of Indians to the British people in general and the British Parliament in particular. It made several useful and effective representations to Parliament and the Government of India regarding Indian grievances. The Association had, comparatively speaking, a short existence as in 1867 Syed Ahmed was transferred from Aligarh and in his new station could barely attend to the affairs of the Scientific Society which had been started two years earlier. The attitude of the British India Association on political questions may, however, be seen from the extracts of Syed Ahmed's address to the Association on May 10, 1866. According to the extracts given by his biographer Graham and partly quoted by Honourable R. M. Sayani in his presidential address at the twelfth session of the All-India National Congress, Syed Ahmed said: "It has been a matter of sincere regret to all thinking Indians that since the assumption of the reins of Government of India by her most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria in person, the attention of her Parliament has not been more bestowed upon measures affecting the future welfare of the inhabitants of this portion of her dominions."[2]

He referred to the apathy displayed by the Indian public and added: "Is this state of things to continue or has time now come when the interests of this great dependency are to be properly represented in the governing body of the British nation?" He continued, in course of his address, "The actions and laws of every Government, even the wisest that ever existed, although done or indicated from the most upright and patriotic motives, have at times proved inconsistent with the requirements of the people, or opposed to real justice. The Indians have, at present,

1. Singh, G. N., *Landmarks in Indian Constitutional and National Development*, 1963, Vol. I, p. 174.

2. Graham, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

little or no voice in the management of the affairs of their country, and should any measure of Government prove obnoxious to them, they brood over, appearing outwardly satisfied and happy, whilst discontent is rankling in their minds."[1]

Syed Ahmed also saw that the unsuccessful War of Independece was being represented as a Muslim revolt, and the Muslims were being suppressed with a very heavy hand. He tried to correct the wrong impression of the British officials, and started a magazine *The Loyal Mohammadans of India*, in which the faithful services of Muslim noblemen were recorded.

But his efforts were principally devoted to the general education of his own countrymen. He realised that unless they received adequate modern education, their condition could not improve and they could not occupy an honourable place amongst the nations of the world. Graham, his biographer, writes, "Syed Ahmed's [motto] was 'Educate,' 'Educate,' 'Educate.' 'All the socio-political ills of India,' he once said to me, 'may be cured by this treatment. Cure the root and the tree will flourish.'" So he started establishing schools, wherever he was posted. The first was started in 1859 at Moradabad, and the second at Ghazipur in 1863. Both these schools were established with the support of the Hindu and Muslim gentry and roused much more popular enthusiasm than the schools opened by the Christian missionaries, who had a virtual monopoly of modern education in those days.

Syed Ahmed's principal measure for the spread of knowledge (before he founded Aligarh College) was, however, the establishment of the Scientific Society—originally known as the Translation Society—which was started at Ghazipur in January 1864. While starting schools and prescribing their curriculum, he realised that Indian languages lacked useful literature contained in the languages of the West. In a speech delivered in 1863 at Calcutta, he said: "The reason, gentlemen, why we are all so

1. Quoted in R.M. Sayani's Presidential Address at the Twelfth Session of the All-India National Congress.

backward now-a-days, is that whilst we are learned in and have benefited by the philosophy, sciences and arts of antiquity, we are almost entirely ignorant of those of modern times." He tried to supply this deficiency by organising a Society for getting useful books in English translated into Urdu. The Society published the *Aligarh Institute Gazette* which was devoted to the spread of knowledge and education, and was responsible for the translation in Urdu of a number of books—including Elphinstone's *History of India*, Mill's *Political Economy*, Malcolm's *History of Persia* and many works on agriculture, chemistry, zoology, etc.

So far Syed Ahmed's efforts were directed towards the advancement of all his countrymen—both Hindus and Muslims. The British Indian Association, as well as the school at Ghazipur was started with the help of both the communities, and the Scientific Society was being managed by Syed Ahmed with the help of his life-long Hindu friend—Raja Jai Kishen Dass. In 1876 however, when Syed Ahmed was at Benares, a development took place which diverted the course of his activities, and as this change has affected the history of this sub-continent, it may be worthwhile examining at length the causes which led to this development, Altaf Hussain Hali, the biographer of Syed Ahmed writes:

"In 1867 some Hindu leaders of Benares resolved that, as far as possible, the use of the Urdu language, written in Persian script, should be discontinued in Government Courts and should be replaced by the Hindi language, written in Devnagri script.

"Sir Syed used to say that this was the first occasion when he felt that it was now impossible for the Hindus and Muslims to progress as a single nation and for anyone to work for both of them simultaneously. His words were:

"'During these days, when Hindi-Urdu controversy was going on in Benares, one day I met Shakespear who was posted there as the Divisional Commissioner. I was saying something

about the education of the Muslims, and Shakespear was listening with an expression of amazement, when, at length, he said, 'This is the first occasion, when I have heard you speak about the progress of the Muslims alone. Before this you were always keen about the welfare for your countrymen in general.' I said, 'Now I am convinced that both these communities (nations)[1] will not join wholeheartedly in anything. At present, there is no open hostility between the two communities, but on account of the so-called 'educated' people, it will increase immensely in future. He, who lives, will see.'

"'Shakespeare, thereupon, said, 'I would be sorry if your prophecy were to prove true.' I said, 'I am also extremely sorry, but I am confident about the accuracy of this prophecy'"[2] (Translated from Urdu)

In one of his letters, which was written when Hindu members of the Scientific Society made a move to substitute Hindi for Urdu in its publications, Syed Ahmed repeated this gloomy forecast. On 29 April, 1870, he wrote to Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk in a letter, which admirably sums up the *raison d'etre* of Muslim separatism, its advantages—and its dangers:

"I have learnt another news which has caused me so much grief and anxiety. At Babu Shiv Parshad's instigation, Hindus have generally resolved to do away with the Urdu language and Persian script, which is a memento of the Muslim rule in this country. I have heard that they have moved the Hindu members of the Scientific Society to see that Hindi should replace Urdu in the newspapers as well as books published by the Society. This is a proposal which will make Hindu-Muslim unity impossible. Muslims will never agree to Hindi, and if Hindus, also following the new move, insist on Hindi, they also will not agree to Urdu. The result will be that the Hindus and Muslims will be completely separated.

1. In Urdu the same word (قوم) stands for a *nation*, as well as a *community*.

2. Altaf Hussain Hali, *Hayat-i-Jawaid*, p. 94.

"So far there is no danger; on the other hand, I think that if the Muslims start business separately from the Hindus, they will gain and the Hindus will lose, but there are two considerations against this course. One objection is from my own temperament, which is keen for the welfare of all Indians—Hindus as well as Muslims—and the other fear is that at present the Muslims are under a cloud of ill-luck and adversity. They are under the influence of false and meaningless prejudices, and do not understand their own welfare. In addition, they are more jealous of each other and more vindictive than the Hindus and suffer much more from a sense of false pride. They are also poorer, and for these reasons, I fear that they may not be able to do much for themselves." [1] (Translated from Urdu).

V

In 1869, Syed Ahmed's son Syed Mahmud was awarded a scholarship for higher studies at Cambridge and Syed Ahmed decided to accompany him to England. He had, for long, toyed with the idea of visiting England and studying for himself the sources of England's power, and his son's visit seemed to offer a suitable occasion to carry out his plans. So, at the age of fifty-two, when most persons in India feel that they are entitled to a well-earned rest, he left his country on this long, expensive and (at that time) most unpopular journey.

He stayed in England for seventeen months and had a very busy time. He had a number of friends amongst the retired British officers and they showed him great courtesy and kindness. Lord Lawrence, for example, used to call on him every month and arranged for his visits to important institutions. He was elected an honorary member of the Atheneum. He was received at the India Office by the Duke of Argyle, the Secretary of State, who was also Patron of the Scientific Society (of which Syed Ahmed was founder-Secretary) and the insignia of C.S.I. was conferred on him.

1. *Maktubat-i-Sir Syed*, 1959, Lahore, pp. 103-4.

In England Syed Ahmed had numerous social and political engagements, but his time was mainly taken up by two things. The first was the preparation of a reply to *Life of Muhammad* by Sir William Muir. He had seen the book, some years back, in India, and one of the objects of his English journey was to collect material for the refutation of this unfair and warped biography of the Prophet. During his study of the subject in England, Syed Ahmed tried to help and encourage all efforts that were being made to do some justice to this much maligned personality. He met Carlyle, who had been comparatively fair to the Holy Prophet in his *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, and very favourably impressed the Sage of Chelsea. He also came to know John Davenport, who had written *An Apology for Mohammad and Mohammadans*, but was unable to find any publisher for his book. Syed Ahmed had the book published at his own expense and got it translated into Urdu. He, however, realised that a more elaborate and scholarly study of the life of the Prophet was necessary than was possible for Carlyle or Davenport to write, and set about the task himself. He spent the greater part of his working hours in libraries of the British Museum and the India Office, and after months of patient research, *Essays on the Life of Mohammad* were ready for the press. Syed Ahmed's letters give a touching account of what he had to undergo to complete the book, and, later, to have it published. The book was a bulky one and, of course, no publisher would bring it into the market except at the author's expense. Syed Ahmed had to spend nearly Rs. 4,000/- to see the result of his love's labour in print, and wrote to his friends in India to sell his library—even his kitchen utensils—to raise the money. The book has, in course of time, been excelled by other literature on the subject (particularly by Syed Amir Ali's *Spirit of Islam*), but it ranks high as a pioneering effort and is a worthy monument to Syed Ahmed's industry, scholarship, robust commonsense and devotion to the Holy Prophet.

Syed Ahmed spent a lot of his time in England in removing misconceptions about Islam and its founder, but, of course, he was too shrewd and too fair not to see that the difficulties of Islam and Muslims would not be solved merely by the publication of

polemic or apologistic literature. There were many things to be set right amongst Muslims, and the true well-wisher of the community had to look to them—even at the risk of his popularity. Syed Ahmed was very favourably impressed by the habits and manners of the English people—by their industry, their cleanliness, their punctuality and their orderly mode of living. Even a maid-servant was polite, well-trained and educated. She would regularly read her copy of the half-penny paper. Syed Ahmed thought that his people had to reform themselves in many of these things and felt that right education was the key to all problems. He visited Cambridge and other British Universities, and after discussion with his son and others, decided that on his return to India, he should work for the spread of suitable, modern education amongst his co-religionists and aim at the foundation of a Muslim Cambridge in his country.

Towards the end of 1870 Syed Ahmed returned to India, and soon thereafter started *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* (Social Reformer) for which he had prepared plans, and even obtained some blocks, while in England. The first issue of the *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* appeared on the 24th December, 1870, and with it, Syed Ahmed began a vigorous campaign for improving the morals and manners of his co-religionists. The child who had bluntly told the Mughal Emperor that he was late in attending his Durbar, because he had gone to sleep and the government officer who had sold his kitchen utensils to find money to refute and criticise a book written by the all-powerful Governor of his province was not going to mince matters, where defects of his own people were concerned. Syed Ahmed was fair by nature, and his opinions were normally sound and reasonable, but if he disapproved of anything, he did not keep his views to himself. In *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, he ruthlessly criticised all the customs and habits which, he thought, were holding up the progress of his people. He compared them with those of the nations of the Western world and used the strongest language to bring home to his co-religionists their backwardness and intellectual decay.

The effect, which *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* produced, was almost

electric, and not exactly what Syed Ahmed would have desired. He had already offended the orthodox in 1868 by advocating in a pamphet that interdining of Muslims with Christians or Jews was not unlawful. His journey to England was also not very popular. But when he began to criticise the age-old customs, and paint in lurid colours the condition of Muslim Society, there was a hue and cry against him and his writings. He had assailed the pride of those people who had lost everything except that and they would not take it lying down. Syed Ahmed made things more difficult by not confining the contents of the magazine to questions of social reforms and by writing unorthodox articles on religious subjects. The result was what might have been expected. A number of magazines came into being to oppose Syed Ahmed. He was called "a Kafir," "an Atheist," "A Kristan" (Christian). Syed Ahmed retaliated spiritedly and was ably assisted by a group of loyal friends. A fierce controversy raged which may not have furthered Syed Anmed's object, but which caused a deep stir in the still waters of the Muslim community.

Opinions differ as to the value of the contribution which *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* made to the fulfilment of Syed Ahmed's main object in life, but its usefulness in focussing attention on many measures of social reforms and especially in shaping Urdu prose is less open to question. Hali called Syed Ahmed "the Father of Modern Urdu Literature". This is probably true only in a limited sense—as an indication of the formative and stimulating influence which Syed Ahmed exercised over four out of five "Pillars of Modern Urdu Literature"—but the contribution which *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* made, in making current a new style of Urdu prose can be acknowledged much more readily. In 1870, when *Thazib-ul-Akhlaq* appeared on the scene, the diction popular amongst the Urdu writers was the same artificial, rhyming prose which Syed Ahmed had used in *Asar-ul-Sanadid* and which could not possibly become a suitable vehicle of literary expression. It is true that in Ghalib's letters, published a year earlier, the rhyming prose had been abandoned, but Ghalib's range of subjects was limited and the few copies of his letters which were sold in one year could not possibly revolutionise Urdu prose. Nobody can

say that *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* was written in the style of Ghalib. The style, which Syed Ahmed used, was his own. It was the expression of his personality - in simplicity, in strength and in bareness—ane during the seven years in which he used it for social, religious, political, economic, historical and literary themes, he gave Urdu a new prose which might he lacking in literary craftsmanship, but which was eminently suitable for satisfying the normal requirements of a modern language.

VI

Side by side with the publication of *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, Syed Ahmed Khan started work for the spread of modern education. On 26th December, 1870, he organised, at Benares, a "Society for the Educational Progress of Indian Muslims", which, after inviting suggestions and considering them, decided to start a Mohammaden Anglo-Oriental College. At first Syed Ahmed wanted to establish a University on the lines of Cambridge, but the Government of India opposed the move and ultimately a College was decided upon. Aligarh, where Syed Ahmed had spent several years as Sub-Judge, was selected as the venue. There was some difficulty in obtaining land for the College and both the Collector of the district and the provincial head of the Education Department opposed the proposal, but Sir John Strachey, the Governor of the Province, overruled them and an extensive piece of land was granted to the College Foundation Committee. In June 1875, preparatory classes were opened, and in July 1876, Syed Ahmed retired from Government service and settled down at Aligarh. Here he started work with his characteristic energy and thoroughness and on 8 January, 1877, foundation-stone of the College was laid by Lord Lytton, the Viceroy of India.

The great dream of Syed Ahmed was nearing fulfilment, but money had yet to be collected to establish and maintain an elaborate educational institution. Syed Ahmed had to employ every possible device to raise funds from running a lottery to the collection of money at a penny-reading performance. He

toured extensively for the purpose, and luckily his efforts were well-rewarded. The religious circles, which objected to his unorthodox views as expressed in the pages of *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, were at first suspicious and critical about the College, but in 1877 all matters concerning the religious education of the boys were entrusted to a committee of orthodox Muslims, and so the fears of the orthodox were allayed. In 1879, Hali published his famous *Musaddas*, which, in a simple, appealing language described the decay of Muslims and contained appreciative references to the efforts of Syed Ahmed. This book—easily the most famous long poem in Urdu—had a profound effect in steadying Muslim opinion, and in general it can be said that after 1880, Syed Ahmed's educational efforts had the general support of Muslim India. He had a most enthusiastic reception, when he toured the Punjab in 1884, and the rulers of Patiala, Hyderabad and Bhopal made princely donations to the College.

Syed Ahmed received generous support from the Government of India and some enlightened European officers. Dr. Hunter, in his book "*Our Indian Musalmans*" had ably brought out the sense of frustration and grievances, from which the Indian Muslims were suffering and had made it clear that unless they got their due share in administration and unless their education was adequately provided for, they would remain disgruntled and be a constant source of anxiety to the State. Syed Ahmed, who was a Wahabi, did not like Hunter's references to his own sect and crossed swords with him on some questions of Islamic law, but there is no doubt that the publication of Hunter's book considerably facilitated Syed Ahmed's task. It threw new light on the Muslim problem and made it clear that the State would gain nothing by maintaining its indifference or hostility to Muslim interests. Whatever be the causes, Syed Ahmed received powerful support from Government of India, and many distinguished Englishmen made handsome personal donations to the College—including a gift of Rs. 10,000/- by Lord Northbrook, the Viceroy of India.

Aligarh College was mainly Syed Ahmed's own handiwork, but he was ably assisted by competent co-workers and the share

of his son, Syed Mahmud, in planning and management of the institution was not a small one. Syed Mahmud had returned to India after a distinguished career at Cambridge and not only could he supply many details about the working of colleges in England, of which most members of the College Committee were ignorant, but he was also able to attract to the College many of his distinguished contemporaries at Cambridge. Syed Ahmed attached great importance to the question of the European staff, and wanted them not only to assist him in the proper upbringing of the College boys but also to help him in bridging the gulf which had grown between the British officers and the Muslims since the Revolt of 1857. The College was, indeed, lucky in many of its European members of the staff. Men like Theodore Beck, who died a premature death, it is said, mainly on account of overwork, Sir Walter Raleigh, the celebrated English critic, Mr. (later Sir) Thomas Arnold, the author of *Preachings of Islam*, and others were not only distinguished teachers and able professors but they took almost paternal interest in the welfare of their students, and worked like slaves to bring the College to the level of similar institutions in England.

When the foundations of the College had been firmly laid, Syed Ahmed's fertile brain thought of another means to promote education and social reforms amongst his people. He realized that one College could not serve the needs of seventy million Muslims and certainly, could not be of any use to those who for one reason or another could not come to Aligarh. He, therefore, founded in 1886, the Mohammadan Educational Conference, which held meetings in various cities of India and carried the message of Aligarh to all parts of the country.

The Conference, as its name implies, was concerned primarily with Muslim education. It kept a vigilant eye on the spread of modern education amongst Muslims, and passed resolutions and took steps to deal with the factors which were hindering its progress. But the Conference was much more than a gathering of Muslim educationalists. It was a powerful instrument of intellectual awakening and general spread of knowledge amongst the

Muslims. It was able to attract orators like Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Dr. Nazir Ahmed, and poets like Hali and Shibli, who used the annual gatherings to engender enthusiasm for social reforms, modern education and general, economic and intellectual progress.

The Conference was also, before the foundation of the Muslim League, the political mouthpiece of the Muslims, and Syed Ahmed's speech against Muslim participation in the Indian National Congress, with which we shall deal shortly, was delivered at the second annual session of the Mohammadan Educational Conference.

VII

By now Syed Ahmed was the undisputed leader of the Indian Muslims and a great national figure. In 1878 Lord Lytton nominated him on the Imperial Legislative Council, and his term of appointment was renewed by Lord Ripon, but after some time, he resigned owing to his preoccupation with the affairs of the Aligarh College. Lord Ripon appointed him on the Education Commission, but he had to give this up too, his place being taken by his son, Justice Syed Mahmud. In 1887, Lord Dufferin appointed him on the Public Service Commission, and in the following year he was knighted.

Syed Ahmed used these opportunities for the welfare of not only his co-religionists but his countrymen at large. He was the firsf Indian to introduce a private bill, which eventually found a place on the statute book. The Kazis Act and the Bill conferring powers for compulsory vaccination against smallpox were passed at his initiative. He also wished to introduce a Waqf bill, in a more comprehensive form than was subsequently adopted in Muhammad Ali Jinnah's Waqf Validating Act, but owing to the opposition of the legal experts of the Government, he could not make much headway.

He was a member of the Council, when the famous Ilbert Bill was introduced and in its support made a vigorous speech, which

has been highly praised even by a thorough-going critic and a political opponent like Abul Kalam Azad. Syed Ahmed and Kristo Dass Paul were the only two non-official members who supported the Bill, which aimed at removing racial discrimination in Indian courts of law.

But Syed Ahmed's efforts for his country were not confined to the precincts of the Council Hall. Whenever he saw that the interests of his countrymen were in danger or that they were not receiving a fair treatment, he came out with a powerful speech or an article, and his opinion could not be easily ignored. By then nearly half a century had passed since the introduction of English and a new class of people was rising, particularly in Bengal, which was trained in the political philosophy of Mill and Burke. They had begun to demand that administration in India should bear some relation to what was being advocated in England by political thinkers and parliamentarians. This frightened many Englishmen in India and they began to urge that the education of Indians on the basis of old Shastras and Sadi and Hafiz would cause less trouble. In 1881, Lord Lytton delivered certain speeches in the Punjab which were calculated to support the so-called "Oriental Studies" at the expense of higher modern education and it was proposed to organize Panjab University as a Vernacular or Oriental University. Syed Ahmed, who saw in the modern education the main hope of the progress of his country and was extremely sensitive on this point, delivered speeches and wrote a series of articles against Government practising what he frankly characterized as a 'fraud' on public. Ultimately the original scheme of the Panjab University was abandoned and a University came into being, which aimed at encouragement of both modern and oriental education.

Similarly a few years later Allan Octavian Hume, the founder of the Indian National Congress, advocated the foundation of a native Volunteers' Corps in India. This was opposed by Syed Ahmed's friend and biographer, General Graham, who in a letter to the *Pioneer*, said: "There would not be many Europeans in the country, if Hume's advocacy of native Volunteers were suc-

cessful." This immediately brought on him the wrath of Syed Ahmed, who wrote to him:

"I have perused your reply to Hume's letter advocating the Volunteering of the natives of India. In not allowing the natives to become Volunteers, the Government mean to say that they do not trust the natives of India. Its consequence should be judged [sic] from the saying, "If you want us to trust you, you should also trust us." There yet exists a wide gulf between Europeans and the natives of India and unless it is filled up, nothing can secure and improve the prosperity of the country,"[1]

Syed Ahmed was extremely sensitive on the question of Indo-European equality. He was a Mughal noble by birth and from his early childhood had seen his grandfather and General Ochterlony meet like best of friends and could not understand why Indians and Englishmen should not meet as equals. In 1867, when a big Durbar was held at Agra and the chairs of Indian guests were placed on a lower level than those of Europeans, he left the Durbar, although he was still in Government service. Till the very end of his life, he criticized all arrangements, under which Indians were not treated on a footing of equality. Shortly before his death, he wrote, with great bitterness:

"In my opinion the time has not come yet, and perhaps will never come when our European friends, conquerors of this country, and naturally full of pride of their conquest, will condescend to sit on the same bench with a conquered and naturally hated Indian, who is desirous of performing his duties with equal honour and respect requisite to his high position. If the Indian wants to keep his self-respect, as an honest and well-bred gentleman, his life becomes unbearable ...

"It is no secret that the treatment which English people accord to their own countrymen and that which they accord to Indians is as different from one another as black is from white."[2]

1. Quoted in Graham, *op. cit.*, pp. 229-230.
2. Quoted in *Eminent Mussalmans* (Natesan), p. 35.

Professor Gurmukh Nihal Singh writes about Syed Ahmed Khan in his *Landmarks in Indian Constitutional and National Development:*

"As early as 1860 Sir Syed had advocated the inclusion of Indians in the Legislative Council in his famous book: 'Causes of the Indian Revolt.' In 1866, he was advocating the foundation of the British Indian Association—which has been described as the forerunner of the Congress and the speech that he delivered on the occasion was truly remarkable. He asked the people to give up fear and be manly, frank and honest and tell the British openly what their grievances were. He denounced the habit of fretting and brooding and condemning measures in their homes but of representing them as just and wise when they met Englishmen. 'Believe me,' he said, 'this moral cowardice is wrong . . . Far better it would be to the interests of India to speak out openly and honestly their opinions as to the justice or otherwise of the acts of government.' In 1877 when Sir Surendranath Bannerjea toured Northern India in connection with the Indian Civil Service agitation, Sir Syed Ahmed presided over the Aligarh meeting held in favour of holding simultaneous examinations. He also gave his hearty support to the Ilbert Bill and to the principle of equal justice to both English and Indians alike."

These activities brought Syed Ahmed in the front rank of those national leaders, who were trying to raise the status of their countrymen, and he fully co-operated, as far as his all-absorbing work at Aligarh permitted, with Surendranath Bannerjea and other nationalist leaders of the country. He was, however, primarily a Muslim leader, and kept a vigilant eye on Muslim interests. He was a true nationalist, but his nationalism was not to the *laissez faire* type, under which the weak grow weaker and the strong become stronger. He was a great champion of Hindu-Muslim unity. He had a very large number of Hindu friends and colleagues, and he kept the doors of his College, established specially for Muslims, wide open for other communities. Out of regard for Hindus, he prohibited slaughter of cows within the College precincts. But he felt that 'justice' could not mean

injustice to his own people and spoke fearlessly when the interests of Muslims were threatened. In 1834, he toured the Punjab and was enthusiastically welcomed by both Hindus aud Muslims. He delivered speeches, breathing a spirit of goodwill and unity, but he made it clear that it would be a poor India, in which only Hindus or only Muslims flourished and the other community was left far behind. His favourite simile was that of a bride, with two lustrous eyes. He said that the Hindus and Muslims were two eyes of this bride—India. "Even if one eye is damaged, the beauty of the bride would suffer."

It was as a champion of the Muslim rights and the guide of Muslim opinion that in December 1837, he delivered a speech which altered the course of events in this country and caused no little misunderstanding in certain circles. At that time the Indian National Congress was two years old and had the support of all influential circles—including the Government. It was no secret that the man who had done most to bring it into existence was a former Secretary of Government of India, Allan Octavian Hume. The Congress had the blessings of the Viceroy, and, in those days, its plenary sessions were attended, as a measure of goodwill and encouragement, by the provincial governors and other high Government officials. As a matter of fact, the Congress and the high officials were working together so closely that at one stage the Congress leaders desired that the provincial governors should preside over its open sessions, and the proposal was not accepted by Government only as this might interfere with free expression of public opinion!

It was this popular body—at that time the darling of the high officials—which Syed Ahmed stood up to oppose. In a forceful speech, he advised his co-religionists to keep aloof from the Indian National Congress, and generally warned them against the inevitable results of its basic demands. He spoke, impromptu, in Urdu, but in a long and somewhat rambling speech, he made two points crystal clear. One was that higher services were to be filled after competitive examinations, they would all go to the community which had a start in education; *viz.*, the Bengalis. Secondly, if

adulterated democracy were to be introduced in this country, Muslims will always be in a minority of one to four. On the second point, he said:

"The second demand of the National Congress is that the people should elect a section of the Viceroy's Council. They want to copy the English House of Lords and the House of Commons. The elected members are to be like members of the House of Commons. Now let us imagine the Viceroy's Council made in this manner. And let us suppose, first of all, that we have Universal Suffrage, as in America, and that all have votes. And let us first suppose that all the Mohammadan electors vote for a Mohammadan member and all Hindu electors for a Hindu member and now count how many votes the Mohammadan member will have and how many the Hindu. It is certain that the Hindu member will have four times as many, because their population is four times as numerous. Therefore, we can prove by mathematics, that there will be 4 votes of the Hindu to every one vote for the Mohammadan. And now how can the Mohammadan guard his interests? It will be like a game of dice, in which one man had four dice and the other only one!"

The effect of the speech was far-reaching and differed in different quarters. A large majority of Muslims welcomed it, and generally kept aloof from the Congress. Others, however, who did not know—or did not wish to know—that there was a Muslim view-point in the Indian political question, were amazed at the speech. Bengalis, of course, condemned it vehemently. Hume, who was a friend and admirer of Syed Ahmed, called it "sheer madness." Hume, however, was not the last English liberal, who applying the Western doctrines to the East, was unable to see that the results of such experiments could be truly surprising!

It has been recently suggested that Syed Ahmed's policy towards the Congress, and his attitude towards introduction of democratic institutions in India was inspired by European staff of the Aligarh College. In their study of the communal problem in India, Messrs. Asoka Mehta and Achhut Patwardhan say about

Syed Ahmed:

"But by 1885, a sudden change came over this great man . . . It was the subtle influence exercised over the aging leader by European principals of the Aligarh College that was responsible for the tragic change in Sir Syed Ahmed's politics. His trusting nature was cynically exploited to array him against Indian nationalism. He was misled into believing that while an Anglo-Muslim alliance would ameliorate the condition of the Muslim community, the nationalist alignment would lead them once again to sweat, toil and tears."[1]

As Theodore Beck was the only Principal of Aligarh College in Syed Ahmed's lifetime according to Messrs. Mehta and Patwardhan, presumably he is to be regarded as the main instrument of Syed Ahmed's conversion. We shall later refer to the role played by Beck in organizing and running Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association of Upper India, which was started in December 1893 to safeguard Muslim interests in the face of an anti-Muslim movement encouraged by Tilak after Hindu-Muslim riots of 1893. It is quite possible that even prior to this, Syed Ahmed utilized Beck's services, as he very frequently did, in case of other members of the College staff, like Shibli, for assisting him in his work. There is, however, no evidence at all to support the thesis that the views expressed by Syed Ahmed in 1887 were either new, or inspired by the European staff. In 1885, there was no "sudden change" over the "great man" and certainly none which was due to the manoeuvres of the European staff of the Aligarh College. Those who know the obstinate and self-willed nature of Syed Ahmed, which increased, instead of diminishing with the years, will be amused at the suggestion that this so-called "great man" was so simple or weak as to surrender his judgment on a fundamental question of national policy to his paid employees, but there are enough external indications to show that what was said in 1837 was only the natural culmination of what Syed Ahmed had said or done many many years earlier.

1. *The Communal Triangle in India*, pp. 23-24.

We have already referred to the gloomy forebodings to which he gave expression in 1867 while conversing with the Commissioner of Benares about the future of Hindu-Muslim relations—and the expression which he gave to the same views in a letter written three years later. All the efforts of Syed Ahmed Khan since the Revolt of 1857 and certainly since 1867 were directed to see that the Muslims were not left behind the sister community in a remorseless struggle for existence. When, as a member of the Legislative Council, he realized more clearly the implications of the democratic system of representation and saw, at close quarters, the temper and abilities of his Hindu colleagues, his fears increased. On 15th January, 1883—full eleven months before Theodore Beck, his supposed mentor in new politics set foot on Indian soil—while speaking on Lord Ripon's Local-Self Government Bill, he gave very clear expression to those views and arguments, which he repeated, while speaking of the goal of the Indian National Congress. He said:

"The system of representation by election means the representation of the views and interests of the majority of the population and in countries where the population is composed of one race and one creed, it is no doubt the best system that can be adopted. But, my Lord, in a country like India, where caste distinctions still flourish, where there is no fusion of the various races, where religious distinctions are still violent, where education in its modern sense had not made an equal or proportionate progress among all the sections of the population, I am convinced that the introduction of the principle of election, pure and simple, for representation of various interests on the Local Boards and District Councils would be attended with evils of greater significance than purely economic considerations. So long as differences of race and creed, and the distinctions of caste form an important element in the socio-political life of India, and influence her inhabitants in matters connected with the administration and welfare of the country at large, the system of election, pure and simple, cannot be safely adopted. The larger community would totally override the interests of the smaller community and the ignorant public would hold Government

responsible for introducing measures which might make the differences of race and creed more violent than ever."[1]

It is quite conceivable that in course of time, Theodore Beck played upon the fears expressed by Syed Ahmed before his arrival. It is certainly true, that when Bengalis instead of trying to understand Muslim fears and to assuage them, poohpoohed all attempts at safeguarding Muslim interests and as Hali records, opposed all petty safeguards accepted by the Government to redress the balance, which, had formerly been tipped so heavily against the Muslims, Syed Ahmed became more deeply perturbed about the future of his people and began to turn more and more to an Anglo-Muslim alliance to save his community from completely going under. Syed Ahmed's opinion, hardened further, when after the Hindu-Muslim riots, which broke out in Bombay in 1893, a general anti-Muslim movement started in various parts of the country. One of the forms, which this movement assumed was an insistence on playing of music before mosques and the greater emphasis on celebrations, which included this amongst their programmes. On this point, it is interesting to read the report of the Sedition Committee, set up by the Government of India, under the chairmanship of Justice Rowlatt (1918):

"Public Ganpati festivals appear to have arisen out of an anti-Mohammadan movement started after riots which broke out in the city of Bombay in 1893 between Hindus and Mohammadans. Agitators who were interested in widening the breach between these two communities encouraged the holding of public celebrations in honour of Ganpati, the elephant-headed god of wisdom and success on a much larger scale than in previous years. The idea appears to have been to make the procession in which the god is carried to his final resting-place in the water as offensive as possible to Mohammadans. During the ten days' celebration of the festival, bands of young men paraded the streets of Poona, singing verses calculated to intensify the feeling against Mohammadans and Government... On one occasion the police

1. Quoted in *Eminent Mussalmans*, (Nateson), pp. 30-31.

came in conflict with a *mela* estimated at from fifty to seventy men which deliberately provoked disorder by passing in procession a mosque in which Mohammadan religious gathering was assembled."[1]

Another aspect of the new movement (which as in case of Ganpati celebrations, had the powerful support of Tilak) was its violent opposition to the slaughter of cows. Cow-Protection Societies were organized in many parts of the country. Their activities were directed against both the Muslims and the Englishmen, but as the latter were too powerful to be touched, the Muslims had to bear the brunt of the agitation. There were Hindu-Muslim riots at several places, and at many more, Muslims, who refused to abide by the Hindu sentiment in favour of the cow were subjected to a severe economic boycott.

This state of affairs intensified Syed Ahmed's fears. He began to wonder that if under the British rule, Hindus wished to exercise so much pressure against normal civic rights of Muslims, what would be the state of affairs if the British left India and reins of Government passed into the hands of the majority community! Beck, naturally, played on these fears, and on 30 December, 1893, Mohammadan Defence Association was organized at Aligarh. Syed Ahmed was now in his seventy-seven years and with his educational, religious and literary preoccupations, was able to give so little time to the new organization, that Hali in his voluminous biography makes no reference to it. No speech of Syed Ahmed, delivered at any meeting of the Mohammadan Defence Association, is included in the collection of his speeches. It is obvious that he devoted very little time to its activities. Beck, who was the Secretary of the Mohammadan Defence Association, was its life and soul. Syed Ahmed, however, attended some of its meetings and from the limited part he took in its deliberations, it is clear that he was full of grave apprehensions about the position to which Muslims would be reduced after the departure of the British, and felt that consolida-

1. *Report of the Sedition Committee*, p. 1.

tion of the British rule in India was in the interest of all minorities, particularly the Muslims.

Nobody who has lived to see the departure of the British and the actual fulfilment of Syed Ahmed's fears, will blame him. In this, as in many other things, it appears that Syed Ahmed's only fault was that he saw farther than any other Muslim of his time. Certainly it is unfair to impute any dishonourable motives, and it is refreshing to turn to the words of Maulana Muhammad Ali, who from the presidential chair of the Indian National Congress, said:

"Reviewing the actions of a bygone generation, today, when it is easier to be wise after the event, I still think that the attitude of Syed Ahmed Khan was eminently wise, and much as I wish that some things which he had said should have been left unsaid, I am constrained to admit that no well-wisher of Musalmans, nor of India, as a whole, could have followed a very different course in leading the Musalmans."

VIII

Hali in his biography of Syed Ahmed has called his life a model one. Syed Ahmed certainly had many outstanding qualities,—energy, industry, moral courage, a dogged will, great capacity for absorbing knowledge from all quarters, political acumen of the highest order, a puckish sense of humour—without which he could not have achieved a fraction of what he accomplished. He was a born leader of men, leonine in appearance and impressive in speech and during the half a century, for which he held sway over Muslim destinies in India, he influenced and brought to the forefront a larger number of capable men, than has been done by any other modern Muslim leader.

He, however, had a full share of the defects of his virtues and if we reflect on his habits and certain incidents of his life, in many respects, he appears a most dangerous "model" to follow. His habit of work, for example, would kill normal human

being. He never slept for more thant hree or four hours, and if owing to illness, or any other cause, he could not get sleep at night, he would get up and start writing. Actually when he was writing his Commentary on the Qur-an, for some time he had completely given up going to bed. He would sit and work on the floor, surrounded by books, and tried to keep himself awake by drinking occasional cups of tea. When sleep completely overpowered him, he would take a book for a pillow, and sleep on the floor for an hour or so and again resume work!

He was equally reckless in his disregard of appearances. He has been called the Father of Modern Urdu Literature, but if so, he was the "most unliterary of men of letter." His motto was "Never mind the manner of writing. Look to matter, first and last." The result was that except, when he was under the influence of a deep emotion (as for instance, when he wrote his famous letter to Hali on the publication of *Musaddas* or when he poured out his sentiments on re-reading Muir's book), his writings lack finish and grace. Even his speeches, which he delivered under the stress of some emotion, usually make better reading than his written articles. The traditional attitude of Indo-Muslim writers towards verbal craftsmanship has been just the reverse of Syed Ahmed. With them "manner" has normally come before the "matter." In a community, which has traditionally regarded painting as taboo (in spite of the admirable Mughal school of painting) and has left music in the hands of lower classes, it was natural that, for artistic self-expression, people should turn more and more to poetry and semi-poetic prose. Syed Ahmed had no patience with fine or even with well-planned writing, and the result is that though in his lifetime he was able to brush aside tinselled cobwebs of imaginative writing, and allow bright, health-giving sunshine into the realms of Urdu prose, today his writings do not attract a large reading public.

He exhibited a similar want of consideration in dealing with human beings. He was a well-meaning, well-mannered Muslim of old Delhi school, extremely warm-hearted in his friendships. The devotion he inspired among a large circle of friends may be

judged from the success with which he was constantly able to draw on them for financial and other help for his numerous schemes of public service. But he was emphatically not one of those,who out of what is often termed "Oriental courtesy," keep up an appearance of friendship even when the true friendly feeling has departed. He called this hypocrisy and would have nothing to do with it. He acted on these occasions, with an amazing brusquerie, and even a marked want of tact. In 1872, some highly placed European officers, including the Collector of the district, opposed the efforts of the College Foundation Committee to obtain land for the College. Syed Ahmed would, thereafter, never invite them to the functions at the College and refused to have any private or social dealings with them.[1]

He once had a similar quarrel with the Lieutenant Governor of the province. In 1869, Syed Ahmed, in the course of an article, passed "some strictures on the Government educational policy" and in reply to that, Sir William Muir challenged the facts narrated by him. In the Urdu version of the Lieutenant Governor's speech, which Syed Ahmed received in England, he appeared to have been accused of a want of veracity. Syed Ahmed resented this deeply, and not only gave up correspondence with Sir William Muir, but on his return to India, avoided all opportunities to meet him. Ultimately the Lieutenant Governor had the following letter written to him, by his Private Secretary :

"My dear Sir,

"The Lieutenant Governor desires me to say that he was glad to hear from Raja Jai Kishan Das, at Aligarh, of your safe return to India, with one of your sons.

"His Honour has been looking for an account of your other son's progress, he being the Lieutenant Governor's nominee for the North-West Province's Scholarship.

1. Hali, *Hayat-i-Jawaid,* (3rd edition), p. 539.

"Sir William Muir will hope to hear about him and about your own welfare."

Syed Ahmed wrote back, referring to Muir's speech, and plainly hinted that there was no point in the Lieutenant Governor's seeing him, if he was "deemed capable of telling an untruth." At this Sir William Muir immediately wrote a personal letter, making it clear that although he still differed with Syed Ahmed about the inferences drawn by him, he could "never have dreamt of imputing to (him) anything approaching to a misstatement of facts." [1]

Syed Ahmed, as we have already stated, advocated loyalty towards the reigning government. Same is the policy of those, who on account of a weakness of character, or for selfish reasons of personal aggrandizement can follow no other course. This has occasionally led to a misunderstanding of Syed Ahmed's political policy, but as would be seen from an account of his career, Syed Ahmed was completely free from any timidity or personal avarice. His policy of loyalty was based entirely on reasons of national interest. It is interesting to read what a celebrated English critic wrote about Syed Ahmed's method of work. Sir Walter Raleigh, who knew Syed Ahmed at Aligarh, wrote some years after his death to Sir Austen Chamberlain:

"I remember being struck in India by the close grip that Orientals have of the essentials of politics. My old chief, Sir Syed Ahmed (a great man, and a great politician) was a most potent diplomatist merely because he knew the value of an ungloved hand. He used to disconcert high officials by blurting out the essential at the very beginning of an interview. The diplomatist thinks that diplomacy is the art of coating pills with sugar!" [2]

Shibli, as we shall see in a later chapter, was a thorough-going opponent of Syed Ahmed's political policy but even he

1. See Graham, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-137.
2. *Letters of Sir Walter Raleigh*, Vol. I, p. 256,

admired Syed Ahmed's courage and strength of character. In the course of an Urdu article, he wrcte in 1910 :

"That powerful pen, that could produce a book like *The Causes of the Indian Revolt* and produce it at a time when the country was yet under the Martial Law ; that brave man, who, in opposition to the Punjab Uuiversity Scheme, mercilessly shattered all the arguments of Lord Lytton, and expressed, in three articles, Indian demands in a language, unequalled in the entire Congress literature ; that hero, who walked out of the Agra Durbar because Indians and the British were not treated alike in the matter of the seating arrangements ; that fair-minded patriot, who hailed the Bengalis as the prime of the country . . . "[1]

Syed Ahmed was easily the ablest Indian Muslim of his day. He was essentially sound in his judgment, but he was trying to lead his people in educational, political, literary, religious, and social matters, and it was not humanly possible for him to attain perfection in each sphere. What he was able to achieve is a marvel, and normally he gives very rare occasions for criticism, but in the very nature of things, he had to say or do things, which if he had had greater leisure to consider them more fully, he might have avoided. This very busy and preoccupied individual had occasionally to offer opinions without fullest realization of implications or to word them in a language which was capable of improvement. Where some of his firm convictions or pet fads were involved, the danger of stepping beyond the strict bounds of cautious statement naturally increased. While criticizing Hunter's book, for example, he was possibly correct in challenging the accuracy of the author's legal conclusion, but forgot that the book was essentially a fair one and very ably brought the hardships, which the Muslims were suffering. Similarly his love of higher education, sometimes, led him to an expression of opinion regarding old system of education, which was not always very happily worded. His objections to encouraging technical education, at the expense of higher literary education, have been

1. *Maqalat-i-Shibli*, Vol. VIII, p. 155.

cautiously worded, but even now they are capable of being misunderstood and his criticism of small, local schools or the old-fashioned Madrasas, appears unfair to the generation, which is not really in touch with their working Similarly he may have been fully justified in holding that the first need of the community was to have a first-rate, well-equipped, modern educational institution, which could train up the future leaders of the people, but in emphasizing this, he sometimes overlooked the needs of the distant Muslims who could not afford higher education of the public school type or send their children to Aligarh.

Syed Ahmed was, as we have said, essentially wise in his views, but towards the close of his life, in some matters, he developed a tendency towards extremism and a slightly reliance exaggerated on his views, which occasionally impaired the value of his judgment. The perseverance with which he continued his religious controversies is a glaring instance of how he persisted in expression of his opinion, even at the risk of imperiling his main work in life. There is no doubt that his religious writings enormously increased his difficulties. His co-workers and friends, like Mohsin-ul-Mulk, advised him to give them up, in the interest of his work. But it would not have been Syed Ahmed, if out of regard for any possible advantage to himself or to his mission, he had suppressed the expression of what he believed to be the truth. He has laid bare his soul, while writing to a friend of his, who advised him in the interests of his public activities, against expression of unpopular views:

"You may not be knowing, but I divide Wahabis (the strict Puritans of Islam) into three categories: (*a*) Wahabis, (*b*) bitter Wahabis and (*c*) thrice bitter Wahabis. I count myself in the third category, and except for what I consider the expression of Truth, do not care a jot for anything else, and believe this to be the very first step towards Islam . . .

"Satan, our enemy, deceives us, under the guise of virtue. We are asked to believe that we are performing noble deeds, and serving the public; and, now, if we utter an unpopular truth,

people will be scared, and our noble work will suffer! This is, in reality, the deception of Satan, under the guise of virtue. To suppress or fight shy of the Truth, and still to expect that virtue will flourish, is like sowing barley and expecting wheat to grow."

Syed Ahmed, therefore, persisted in expression of his unorthodox and unpopular views on religious questions. When the Aligarh College was established, he had agreed to hand over all religious affairs of the college to a committee of orthodox Muslims and had promised to have nothing to do with these matters himself. Under this arrangement, the spiritual side of the college was deprived of the support of a dynamic personality, but Syed Ahmed faithfully carried out the agreement. He not only left the management of the religious affairs of the college severely alone, but would not allow any of his controversial publications to fall into the hands of the college students. Outside the college, however, he did not give up his activities. As a matter of fact, now, he embarked upon the most ambitious of his religious works—the Commentary on the Qur-an. During his controversy with Muir and after reading the Christian literature on Islam, he had felt that if Islam was to appeal to Indian Muslims, even after they had received modern education, a modern interpretation of Islam reconciling it with the latest scientific theories was essential. He had spread the modern education amongst Muslims, and he felt it was his duty to save them from any adverse effects this may have on their loyalty towards their religion.

A year after the foundation of the college, he started his Commentary. He devoted more and more of his time to this work, till, at length, seven bulky volumes were written, but he died before his task was finished. This book, even as it is, is a colossal monument of industry and scholarship. Syed Ahmed ransacked the entire literature of Islam to cull out authorities whose views supported his thesis, that there was nothing in the Qur-an which was incompatible with modern science. "The word of God (Qur-an)," he said, "must be in harmony with the work of God (Nature)." He followed the Mutazalli method in conforming religion to science, and is regarded as the leader of modern

Mutazallites. Some of his conclusions are open to criticism and whenever an assertion is made with regard to an ancient revealed religion, that it conforms in every respect to the latest scientific opinion, some far-fetched interpretations are inevitable but the Commentary is a monumental work. Of course, it is possible to differ from the basic principle, that religion should conform to scientific knowledge, but if the need for proving Islam as fully compatible with all modern knowledge is accepted, Syed Ahmed would seem to have fulfilled this need much better than anyone else has done so far. To judge the stupendous nature of Syed Ahmed's work, it is only enough to compare his *Tafsir* with the celebrated Almanar Commentary on the Qur-an. Syed Ahmed wrote in Urdu, and hence his work is not so well-known as the Arabic Commentary of the Egyptian scholars, but in ripe scholarship, close reasoning and soundness of judgment, it has not been excelled by the later publication.

In writing his Commentary, Syed Ahmed had shown scant regard for the susceptibilities of the orthodox, but luckily it aroused much less active hostility than his *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*. For one thing, his point of view was now generally known, and did not shock the public opinion as much as it did a few years back. He also was now a maturer, and if not a sadder, at least a wiser man. In the early days, when his views were criticized, he retaliated and so the fires of controversy were constantly fed. Now his attitude was different. He smiled at the severest possible criticism or even downright abuse, and disarmed opposition, or at least made it look ridiculous by a puckish sense of humour.

Unluckily, it cannot be said that the object, to which Syed Ahmed devoted so much of energy and time, has been achieved. His Commentary may have provided adequate answers to the wavering or the sceptical, and some of his theories have been incorporated in their systems by modern sects, like the Ahmadis, but it cannot be said that his views have found general currency, or that they have been adopted, even by those Muslims who have received modern education. This is partly due to the revival of orthodox Islam under the influence of Abul Kalam Azad and Iqbal, but must be partly attributed to decline of real

interest in religion.

Syed Ahmed's peculiarities of characters which were really the overflow of an honest, straightforward, puritanical temperament, increased his difficulties, but he had to suffer many accidental misfortunes also. Of his two very able sons, one died prematurely, and the other—Syed Mahmud—had a nervous breakdown, from which he did not recover during the lifetime of his father, and died shortly after his death. Added to these domestic misfortunes were some serious difficulties connected with the college. In 1889 after certain instances of indiscipline by the college boarders, who were supported by some influential members of the College Committee, serious difficulties arose between the European members of the staff and these Committee members, and to assuage the fears of the European staff, which was supported by high Government officers, a new Trustee Bill had to be adopted. This caused a split amongst the supporters of the college, and caused no little pain and anxiety to Syed Ahmed. In 1895, an even bigger misfortune fell. Shyam Behari Lal, the college accountant, by forging cheques and receipts, defrauded the college to the extent of a lakh of rupees.

Syed Ahmed was struggling courageously against these misfortunes when a development took place in the attitude of Indian Muslims towards Turkey, which caused him great anxiety. At that time, the cloud that appeared on the horizon was no bigger than a hand, but Syed Ahmed, with his characteristic foresight, saw how it would grow, and tried to arrest its becoming a menace to the welfare of his people. He had greatly encouraged friendship between Turkey and Indian Muslims. Amongst the Muslim countries abroad, he saw in Turkey the only one from which Indian Muslims could learn something for modernizing their life and improving their social habits. In *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, he constantly published articles about Turkey. He was probably the first Indian Muslim to wear (what was at that time the) Turkish Fez, and he made it a part of the college uniform. But now Indian Muslims began to take an interest in Turkish affairs, which, without being of any material help to Turkey, might jeopardize

their own future. Towards the end of his life, Gladstone, the Liberal Prime Minister of England, started a campaign against Turkey, which had important repercussions in India. Indian Muslims looked upon the Armenian rebellion against the Turks and the war between Greece and Turkey, as a revival of the old crusades between Christians and Muslims. Many influential Muslims began to refer to the Turkish Caliph as the spiritual head of the Muslim world, like the Pope amongst the Roman Catholics. Syed Ahmed became uneasy. His personal sympathies were emphatically with the Turks, but he feared that this outburst of pro-Turkish feeling amongst Indian Muslims, without effectively helping the Turks, might complicate their relations with the British. Since the Revolt he had worked assiduously to smooth out differences between the Indian Muslims and the British, and, after the rise of the Indian National Congress, had begun to rely more and more on an Anglo-Muslim alliance to save Muslims from being submerged by the sister community. This line of approach was being threatened by the new development. He, therefore, wrote a series of articles denouncing the activities of Gladstone, and indicating on which side the sympathies of Indian Muslims lay, but emphatically warned his Indian co-religionists against imputing religious motives to political warfare and allowing ineffective sympathy for the Turks to imperil their own safety. He also made it clear that in their long history—and particularly under the Mughals—Indian Muslims had never regarded the Sultan of Turkey as their spiritual head and that they were under no religious obligations to him. Syed Ahmed not only used his own pen for this unpopular, but from practical point of view, sound piece of advice, but obtained the help of other scholars, and Shibli wrote a well-documented article in support of the thesis advanced by Syed Ahmed.

Syed Ahmed was now advancing in years, and apart from old age, the blows which he had suffered towards the end of his life, seriously affected his health. He, however, did not allow this to interfere with his activities. The casual way in which he refers in his letters even to serious illness is typical of the man. In March 1894, he wrote to a friend, "I have been lately somewhat

ill. The action of my heart had slowed down and the circulation of blood was retarded. This led to a swelling of the feet and the thighs, but it was nothing more than a result of the slow action of heart, and now . . ."

A year later, Sir Abdul Qadir saw him at Shahjahanpur, where he was conducting the annual session of the Mohammadan Educational Conference :

"I was struck with his wonderful energy. Though he was then an old man of 78, he sat for more than six hours every day in the Conference, as its Secretary. He gave numerous interviews to its members and visitors in the hours preceding and following the sittings and with the exception of the time of meals, he was busy from early morning till late at night, unruffled and majestic."

Hali, who saw him about this time, wrote in a letter to a friend :

"Sir Syed Ahmed Khan is slightly less than 80, and has suffered various blows and sorrows, but from his activities and the arrangements he is making about the college, one would think that he is going to live for ever !"

Syed Ahmed's last years were clouded by personal tragedies, but his work for the college and his people continued right till the end. Eight days before his death, he employed his pen once again in the support of Urdu, in the Hindi-Urdu controversy, which was lifting its head once again, and shortly thereafter, commenced an article in defence of the Prophet.

The end came suddenly. He fell ill on the 24th March, 1898, and passed away, two days later, with his favourite verses of the Qur-an on his lips.

IX

Syed Tufail Ahmed in a book, which is not remarkable for

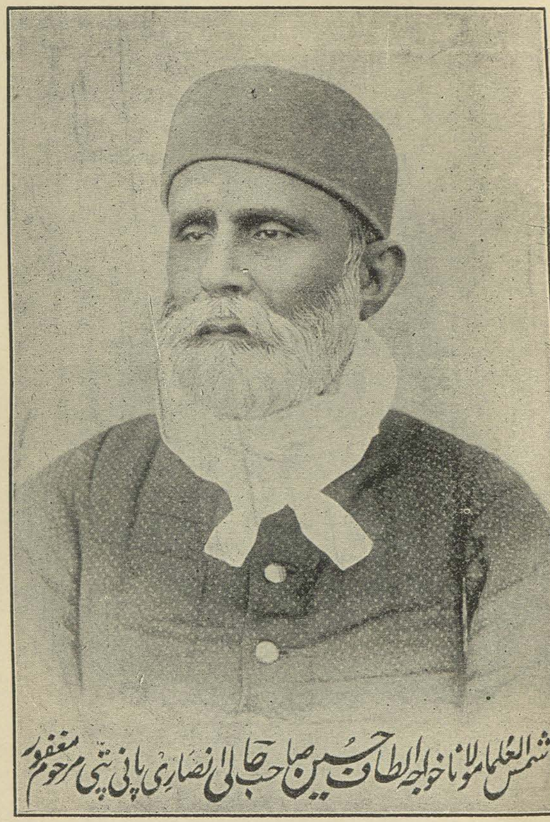
any partiality towards Syed Ahmed, says: "The Indian Muslims realized their decay and downfall only about 1870, and this was the time when Syed Ahmed started his movement of reform. At that time the Indian Muslims realized for the first time that the responsibility for their progress and welfare, which was being formerly shouldered by the Islamic Government, had now to be discharged by themselves, and their well-being in future would depend on their efforts. In short, Syed Ahmed's movement made them self-conscious, and they began to use their limited resources to regain their lost glory."[1] Pannikar writes in his *A Survey of Indian History*, "Indeed, it could well be claimed for Syed Ahmed that not only had he arrested the disintegration of Islam but in the course of a generation had restored it to a position of great importance and undoubted influence."[2] Choudhry Khaliquz-Zaman in his *Pathway to Pakistan* repeatedly refers to Sir Syed as "Father of Muslim India"[3] and "Father of Modern Muslim India", certainly he was.

Syed Ahmed filled a big void created in the life of Muslim community by disappearance of Muslim rule. But he did more. His long life, spanning almost a century, bridged the gulf between the medieval and the modern Islam in India. Himself a relic of the palmy days of the Great Mughals, he ushered in a new era. He gave the Indian Muslims a new cohesion, a new political policy, new educational ideals, a new prose, a new approach to their individual and national problems, and built up an organization which could carry on his work. Before him there was all disintegration and decay. He rallied together the Indian Muslims, and became the first prophet of their new nationhood. He could very well say, about 70 million Muslims of India:

هجومے بود راہ گم کردہ در دشت
ز آواز درایم کاروان شد !

1. Syed Tufail Ahmed: *Mussalmanon ka Roshan Mustaqbil*, p. 1.
2. Pannikar, K.M.: *A Survey of Indian History*, (5th Ed.), p. 284.
3. Khaliquz-Zaman, Choudhry: *Pathway to Pakistan*, pp. 226, 295.

They were like a multitude, that had lost its bearings in the
wilderness.
I gave my clarion-call, and lo, they became a compact
caravan!



(p. 67) KH. ALTAF HUSSAIN HALI

CHAPTER 3

HALI

SYED Ahmed Khan's greatness consisted not only in what he was able to do himself, which in itself was remarkable, but perhaps even more so in what he was able to get others to achieve. Like a great leader of men, he inspired many worthy souls, and moulded and heightened their capabilities.

Amongst a distinguished set of people whom Syed Ahmed influenced, the noblest figure is perhaps that of Hali. He was born at Panipat in 1837, in a respectable but poor family. He left for Delhi for his education and received a limited and unsystematic schooling, but was able to attract the attention of Ghalib, the great Urdu poet, who became his master in the art of versification. After the Revolt of 1857, he was for some years in the service of Nawab Mustafa Khan, a friend of Ghalib and himself a good poet and even better as a connoisseur of good poetry. In this literary atmosphere, he began to write Urdu poetry, according to the old, conventional style, popular at the time, but when he became a sub-translator in the newly opened Government Book Department at Lahore, he was able to see, at least in translation, something of the freedom, which the English poets enjoyed in selection of themes and their treatment. He, along with Muhammad Hussain Azad, was one of the two pioneers who began experiments in "Natural Poetry" and started poetic symposiums at Lahore, where poems were read on given poetic themes, usually connected with nature, instead of following the rhyme and metre of a given hemistich, which was the practice in the old poetic symposiums.

Hali was passing through this transitional period of his literary career, when he came across Syed Ahmed Khan. In the new atmosphere at Lahore he had lost interest in the conven-

tional erotic verse, popular at Lucknow and Delhi, but the "Natural Poetry," with which he and Azad had been experimenting, also lacked the glow of personal feeling, and was not a literary triumph. Syed Ahmed set him a task, which, while it perfectly suited the temperament and the poetic genius of Hali, was also to demonstrate the possibilities of the new school of poetry. Syed Ahmed asked him to write a poem on the rise and fall of Islam, and use his muse for awakening his people to a true appreciation of the tragedy which had overtaken them.

The result was the famous *Musaddas* of Hali, of which the first version was published in 1879. Hali sent the book to Syed Ahmed, at whose instance it had been written, and offered the copyright to the Aligarh College. Syed Ahmed replied in a letter, which has become a classic in Urdu literature :

"I am deeply thankful to you for suggesting that the copyright of the book should be got registered by the Aligarh College, but I do not want that publication of this book, which mirrors the sad state of our people and is, really, an elegy on our downfall, should be subject to any restriction. The more it is printed and the wider its circulation . . . the greater will be my pleasure."

About Hali's statement in the introduction of the poem, that Syed Ahmed had suggested its composition, that large-hearted friend and leader of men wrote :

" It is true I was the immediate cause of the composition of the poem, and I am so proud of this fact that when on the Day of Judgment, I shall be asked about good deeds performed by me in my earthly career, I shall say, 'Nothing, except that I got Hali to write his Musaddas !' "[1] (Translated from Urdu).

Hali's *Musaddas* is a long poem, and, in its final version, consists of 456 stanzas of six line seach. It is an account of the rise and fall of the Muslims, beginning with the condition of

1. *Maktubat-i-Sir Syed*, 1959, Lahore, p. 312.

Arabia before the advent of Islam, the message of the Holy Prophet, the transformation it wrought in the moral and material condition of the Arabs, the achievements of Muslims in the heyday of their glory, a graphic picture of their present decadence, and, in the end, a message of hope and good cheer.

The *Musaddas* is avowedly a poem with a purpose. It was written with an object in view and some may turn up their noses simply on that account. They will be, however, less than fair to the poem, because, although Hali started with an end in view, his deep feeling on the subject completely enveloped him, and while reading the poem, the poet's original object is only dimly visible. As a matter of fact, very few people, who have read and re-read *Musaddas*, but have not seen Syed Ahmed's letter to Hali, or very carefully read the introduction, are aware that it was written at the instance of Syed Ahmed Khan and with a certain objective. The poem is the out-pouring of a soul in anguish, and not the didacation of a moralist.

Musaddas was also a great literary triumph. It has its dull moments—and which long poem of the world has not?—but they are rare, and the reader moves from stanza to stanza, from the beginning to end, without any loss of interest. The marvel is that all this effect is achieved, without any rhetoric, any heightening of tone, or the usual poetic artifices. Even the expression of the poet's poignant grief is restrained, and well within the bounds of artistic requirements. The appeal of the poem is not only in its undercurrent of deep, infectious pathos, but in its literary beauty and the art that conceals art.

Musaddas is no less remarkable for the beauty of its subject-matter. It depicts Islam in its noblest and most beautiful form. With such a universal religion, adopted by different people, interpreted in various forms, the conception of Islam must differ from man to man. But Hali's vision is easily the most soul-purifying and soul-edifying, which the Indian Muslim literature has ever known. There is no rigid dogma. No contempt of others. No emphasis on the formal. Throughout the poem there

is a deep undercurrent of soul-purification, of rubbing the moral and spiritual edges, and of making oneself a beautiful instrument in the service of God. Hali's saintly vision will be treasured not only by the Muslims, but considered noble and beautiful by men of all faiths, and represents, in reality, that essence of morality and spiritual beauty, which all noble souls of the world value. His picture of the mission of the Prophet, for example, will appeal not only to a Muslim but even to a lover of *Ahimsa*, and an advocate of the so-called "Christian virtues:"

> He, who won the title of 'A Blessing among the Prophets,'
> He, who fulfilled the desire of the indigent,
> He, who helped the strangers in their distress,
> He, who sympathised with the friend and the foe,
> He was the shelter for the poor, and the protection for the weak.
> He was the guardian of the orphans, and the champion of the slaves,
> He was the forgiver of the wrong-doer,
> He won a place, even in the hearts of his enemies,
> He, who ended dissensions and calamities,
> He, who united the warring tribes,
> Came from the top of *Hira* towards his people,
> And brought with him a wonder-working remedy (*viz.*, Islam).

This noble and ennobling picture of the Prophet appears again and again in the *Musaddas*. Hali says towards the end of his poem:

> O God, for the sake of the Prophet of Arabia,
> Who was a friend of every human being,
> He, who cared for all, the distant and the near,
> He, to whom the Meccans, the Negroes and the Syrians were alike,
> He, who put up with the mischief of the mischievous,
> He, who wished well even to the evil-doer.

The main theme of the poem was the glorious rise and the

tragic fall of Islam, and many passages on this subject have become deservedly famous. One of these is:

> Let some one go and see the ruins of Cordova,
> The arches and the doors of its magnificent mosques,
> The mighty palaces of the Arab Chiefs,
> And their decayed pomp and grandeur.
> The glory of their race shines from beneath the debris,
> Just as pure gold glitters in a heap of ashes.

Another well-known passage is:

> If there could be found a hillock so high,
> Whose top might reveal the sight of the whole world;
> If a knowing man climbs such a height,
> And beholds the unfolded scene of the nature around;
> He will then see such differences between the nations,
> That the whole world will appear upside down to him,
> He will behold a thousand gardens around him,
> Many fresh and green, like the garden of Paradise;
> Others less adorned, yet fresh and happy;
> Others all sere and dry,
> But though their plants bear no foliage or fruit,
> Their saplings yet hold for them a promising future!
> He will next behold a garden, all in ruins,
> Which ever remains in the grip of the dust-storms,
> Which has no sign of verdure anywhere,
> Whose green branches have withered and are blighted,
> Which is incapable of bearing fresh fruit or flower,
> Whose dried stems are only fuel, fit to be burnt.
> Where even the rain does the work of fire.
> Where even the pearl-producing cloud produces floods,
> Which if devastated more, the more it is looked after,
> To which are congenial neither spring nor autumn,
> A voice is constantly coming from there—
> " This is the ruined garden of Islam."[1]

1. See *Hali's Poetry—A Study* by Tahir Jamil.

Hali reverts to this gloomy picture, again and again. There is a quatrain of his:

> In the desert, when I came upon a barren wilderness;
> On which, even in rains, there was no trace of verdure,
> Which the farmer had long ceased to have the heart to till,
> I was reminded of the desolation of my own people!

There is a couplet of his, describing the sad lot of the Muslims:

> They possess neither wealth, nor prestige, neither learning, nor art,
> Faith alone remains—and that too is like a tree without leaves or flowers.

The success of the *Musaddas* was phenomenal. It took the Muslim India by storm. Its language was simple and readily understood by everybody. It was not marred by those religious controversies which had obscured, for many, the message of Syed Ahmed Khan. It was written with deep sincerity, and great literary skill, and struck a responsive chord in the heart of every thoughtful Muslim. During the seven years which intervened between the first and the final version, the poem went through seven or eight editions, and scores were yet to come. Its lines were on everybody's lips. Its extracts were taught in Muslim schools and recited in religious and educational gatherings. In recent years, the vigorous optimism and revivalist fervour of Iqbal has begun to replace, in popular favour, Hali's pathos and urge for self-purification, but for nearly half a century, the *Musaddas* held the centre of the stage. It became the Bible of the new movement, and in creating a widespread awakening amongst the Muslims, its contribution is next only to that of the Aligarh College and the Muslim Educational Conference. Maulvi Iqbal Ahmed writes in his incomplete biography of Shibli:

"Can any justice-loving person deny the fact that in popu-

larising the message of Sir Syed, the bulky volumes of *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* could not achieve a fraction of what Hali's *Musaddas* did?

> What can be done by one effective verse,
> Cannot be done by the thousands of soldiers!"

Hali wrote his *Musaddas* at the instance of Syed Ahmed, but his achievement was peculiarly his own. His poem was a great success not because it embodied the Aligarh ideals in an artistic form but because it was an expression of a beautiful and saintly personality. "In the circle of Sir Syed's friends and co-workers, which consisted of many distinguished and venerable people, Hali's character was the noblest and the highest." Khwaja Ghulam-us-Saqlain considered Hali a regular saint, and Syed Mahmud, when asked to name the human being he venerated most, referred to the author of the *Musaddas*. Hali belonged to that (unfortunately) dwindling circle of select Muslims, who, brought up in the spiritual atmosphere of the old Islam, lived a truly beautiful and saintly life. Like the modern revivalists, they were not drunk with a sense of their own superiority, but worked ceaselessly to make their lives pure, useful to others, and full of inner harmony. Hali's character has been sketched by Maulvi Abdul Haq, who knew him at close quarters, and we see therein a man, who had no thought of self, who felt deeply over the sufferings of others, whe treated his enemies and critics with the utmost consideration—even tenderness—and whose nobility of character ultimately wore down the opposition of his foes.

It is doubtful whether, during the last hundred years—or even since the days of Shah Wali Ullah—Muslim India has been subject to a nobler influence than that of Hali. He is really a link between the modern Muslim India and those venerable figures of the past, who, like Khwaja Baqi Billah of Delhi, Nur Qutb-i-Alam of Bengal, Baba Ahmed Khittu of Ahmedabad, and Hazrat Chiragh-i-Dehli, have been the spiritual strength of the Indian Islam, but who had not found literary expression of their longings and dreams.

This was the man, who wrote the *Musaddas*, and his personality is enshrined, not only in his poetic masterpiece, but in his other works. Apart from his poetic achievements, Hali was a pioneer in Urdu literature, both in literary criticism and the modern art of biography, and in his prose books, we see the same fairness, balance, and sweet reasonableness, which one would expect from the author of the *Musaddas*. His "Life" of his literary master—Ghalib—is probably the most popular biography in Urdu. In it Hali unveiled for the first time the greatness of a rich and lovable personality, and, as a critic has recently remarked, his book has contributed as much to the popularity of Ghalib, as the poet's own works! Still nobody has ever alleged that Hali has been partial to his master and, as a matter of fact, if the encomiums of modern critics like Bijnori[1] or Mehar[2] are to be one's guide, one would think that Hali had under-estimated Ghalib!

Hali brought the same fair, balanced, comprehensive approach to literary criticism. Before him criticism in the modern sense hardly existed in Urdu. Either we had a collection of very superficial biographical details, or criticism was the hoarse voice of prejudice and partisanship. Even Mohammad Hussain Azad, a much greater craftsman than Hali, had set no lofty example of objective criticism. To this plaything of the men of letters Hali brought a cool, balanced, and disciplined mind. He never exaggerated the importance of his own predilections, he never ignored what was reasonable in the point of view of the others, and the result is that although nearly half a century has passed since he wrote his books, his writings still remain the highest water-mark which literary criticism has ever attained in Urdu. He had no direct access to English, he never received that academic training which Bijnori or Latif received at the universities of the West, but, by all accounts, his critical work is of a higher value than of these distinguished products of modern education. Hali may have been ignorant of Western methods of literary criticism, but he brought a fair, understanding personality to his task, and gave Urdu literature a poise and balance by bequeathing a measure of

1. In his *Mahasan-i-Kalam-i-Ghalib*.
2. In his *Ghalib*.

this personality.

For Hali, Syed Ahmed was the main hope of the Muslim community, but he did not hesitate to differ from him, when an occasion arose. Of this—and Hali's clear vision of things—we get the best example in his attitude towards women. Syed Ahmed was the pioneer, amongst Indian Muslims, of modern education amongst men, but he left the education of women severely alone. His thesis was that once the males received education, they would educate the females also. He even stated that the old semi-religious education which the girls received within their homes was good enough for them. Hali courageously differed from this view—even in his biography of Syed Ahmed—and held that the proper education of girls was as important as that of boys. He reverts to the same theme in "Chup Ki Dad," and although towards the end of the poem he does not name Syed Ahmed, his sarcastic reference is obviously directed towards him.

But even more valuable than Hali's wise emphasis on female education was his tender and ennobling conception of womanhood. Since the beginning of history, woman has had something of a raw deal in the East. In the ancient literatures of India, Persia and Arabia, and in the popular proverbs, which reveal the subconscious attitude of people towards various things, there is a deep-rooted contempt and hostility towards the female sex. Islam meant a very marked advance in human attitude towards women. It severely curtailed, if not abolished, polygamy, gave women right of property ownership (which they do not possess in many Western countries even today), and in his many sermons—including the last—the Holy Prophet advocated gentleness and fairplay towards the fair sex. In spite of all this, it appears that the traditional attitude of the East has triumphed over Islamic teachings, and, as a French writer has observed, today the mental attitude of Muslims towards women is more that of the pre-Islamic Arabs than of the Holy Prophet. It is, therefore, very much to the credit of Hali that he has overcome the traditional prejudices and his poetry breathes a spirit of tenderness and reverence for the fair sex. He has written many poems on the subject, but perhaps

most typical as his attitude towards Indian womanhood are the opening verses of 'Chup Ki Dad,' in which he says:

> O mothers, sisters, daughters. You are the adornment of the world.
> You bring life and joy to the habitations; you are the honour of the nation.
> You are the comfort of the husbands, you are the joy of the children.
> Without you the whole house is desolate: indeed you are the very life of a home.
> You bring sunshine to the invalid, you are the comfort of the workless.
> You are the rich wealth of the indigent, with you even poverty is enjoyable.
> Modesty is your very mould; fidelity and affection are your very nature.
> Patience and forbearance are ingrained in you; indeed you are the soul of humanity.

Hali breathed a spirit of saintliness in our literature, but his title to pre-eminence rests on other grounds also. He was the first national poet of the Muslim India. The very scheme of the *Musaddas* was based on the assumption that the Muslims were a separate entity, and Hali became their mouthpiece. He strengthened his claims to this title by writing many other poems, in which the main theme, in one form or another, is the decay of Indian Muslims, and the poet's passionate desire for their uplift. He even wrote a long and effective poem "Shikwa-i-Hind," in which after recounting many gifts, which Mother India had showered on the Muslims, he describes the sad plight in which they have now fallen:

> Whither has gone the superiority of the Muslims,
> In wealth, wisdom and learning?
> Whither has gone that fixity of purpose,
> That knew no barrier of land or sea?

Whither has gone that vigour and where are those strong sturdy arms?

The poet mildly reproaches India and her charms for the evil days on which the Indian Muslims have fallen and says:

Just as the army of Alexander marched back after reaching your border,
I wish we also had returned unsuccessful from your gates!

Some may criticise this aspect of Hali's message, and see in it the germ of that Muslim separatism, which, hardened and deepened by an unfavourable atmosphere, became a baffling problem for the whole of India. But none of Hali's contemporaries complained of his communalism. At that time the Indian nationalists had not adopted their later tactics of trying to solve the communal problem and evading the Muslim demands by ignoring them. At that time, the Hindu leaders frankly recognised that the Muslims were separate from them in several ways—for one thing the orthodox Hindus regarded them as untouchable, and would not dine or intermarry with them—and had a perfect right to safeguard their individuality. A Hindu leader, as eminent as Gokhale, said, "If the Hindus had been in the same numerical minority, in which the Muslims find themselves today, they would have asked for the safeguards. It is the duty of the majority to understand and remove the reasonable fears of the minorities." The separate requirements of the Muslims were so generally recognised, that some Hindus assisted in the establishment of a separate Muslim College at Aligarh. Patiala and Vizagapatam are only two of the Hindu States which made handsome donations to the college funds. Syed Ahmed himself, till he opposed the Indian National Congress, was respected and liked by all progressive Hindus, and received most eulogistic addresses from them during his tours in the Punjab.

But Hali's communalism was not only the result of circumstances accepted as natural and unavoidable by all concerned. His was also not that aggressive and self-reliant separatism with

which India has become familiar since the days of Iqbal. His (and Syed Ahmed's) communalism was mainly defensive in nature and inspired by the worthiest and noblest of motives. Muslims at that time were already segregated, separated from others by being completely left behind in the struggle for existence, and Syed Ahmed's and Hali's efforts were to see that they were not completely ground down. They had no ill-will against their countrymen, no disrespect towards their religion and institutions; they never preached or even countenanced preaching of communal hatred, but the noblest part of their being surged them to rescue their community from the plight into which it had fallen. If this is communalism, Hali would have gladly pleaded guilty to the charge, and perhaps every conscientious, self-respecting Muslim will join him.

Hali was the national poet of Indian Muslims, but there was no truer lover of Hindu-Muslim unity. He had scores of Hindu friends, and his relations with them were very cordial. He was by nature sweet and friendly, and wished well to all communities. We find him pleading for Hindu-Muslim unity in all stages of his life. When he was at Lahore, he wrote a poem on "Patriotism," in which he says:

> If you desire the good of your country,
> Then do not consider any compatriot of yours as a stranger,
> Be he a Muslim or a Hindu;
> Be he a Buddhist, or a Brahmoo,
> Look on them all with the eyes of friendship;
> Consider them like the pupils of your eyes.

In his *Musaddas*, he preaches the same lesson of friendliness and goodwill:

> This was the first teaching of the Book of Guidance (the Qur-an),
> That all humanity is the family of God;
> He alone is the friend of the Lord,
> Who is friendly to the Lord's creations.

This alone is devotion ; this is true religion and faith,
That man should help his brother man.

In a latter quatrain, he says:

Let us not quarrel with the Hindu, nor bear ill-will to the Geber,
Let us shrink from doing harm, and in return for harm do good,
Then, let those who say "This world is a Hell,"
Only come and explore this Paradise !

Not only did Hali preach inter-communal harmony in his poetry but nobody worked harder to solve that problem, which has marked the beginning of Hindu-Muslim disunity—the Urdu-Hindi controversy. We have already referred to Syed Ahmed's grim prophecy at the beginning of anti-Urdu movement in 1867. That far-seeing statesman knew the importance of language in building up common thoughts, in evolving a common literature, and in keeping one section of the community informed about feel ings, the dreams, and the aspirations of the other. He at once realised that if India could not have a common language, it could not build up a common nationality. The population must split into the Urdu-speaking and the Hindi-speaking nations. The gulf widened after Syed Ahmed's death, but it must be said to Hali's credit that, both by example and precept, he tried to bridge it. He himself wrote a very simple form of Urdu, which would be easily intelligible to Hindus and Muslims alike. About his poem on "The Plaint of a Widow," Mahatma Gandhi has been quoted as saying, that if there could be a common language of this sub-continent, it would be the language used in the poem. Hali was constantly taunted by the critics for the free use he made of Hindi words in his writings. One of the critics, who wrote a *Musaddas* in reply to Hali's poem says, sacrcastically :

"He [Hali] will insist on bringing Hindi words into Urdu !"

Hali would have gladly taken this taunt as a compliment.

Throughout his writings, he asked Urdu writers to study Hindi, if not Sanskrit. He writes in the Introduction to his *Diwan*:

"As is well known, Urdu language is based on Hindi. All its verbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and the greater part of nouns are derived from that language. . . So the Urdu poet, who does not know the Hindi language and wants to drive his cart only with the help of Arabic and Persian, is like a cartman who wishes his carriage to reach the destination without any wheels."

At another place, he says that the only solution of Hindi-Urdu controversy was that the Hindus should use Urdu, which was really a developed form of Hindi, while Muslims should avoid unfamiliar Arabic and Persian words. He criticised the Muslims for neglecting Hindi and Sanskrit, and urged that the ideal at which both communities should aim at should be the simple, spoken language of Delhi, which was current amongst Hindus and Muslims and was the standard form of Urdu before it became ornate and artificial under the influence of Lucknow school of writers.

Hali was a fair-minded critic, but his verses did not always have the grace or finish of a Ghalib or an Iqbal. In poetry he aimed at simple, unsophisticated expression of feelings and cared little for the literary embellishment. He, himself, has described his ideal in the following words:

> My Muse! if thou be not heart-entrancing, it does not matter;
> But, pity on thee if thou be not heart-melting.
> Though, the whole world be spell-bound in allegiance to artifice,
> Courage, from thy own simplicity do not turn back!

When he was uplifted by a steady, inspiring vision, as in the *Musaddas* and some other poems, his ideal of versification gave good results. But he did not always maintain these heights, and even the supplement he added to the *Musaddas* is not of the same

high order as the original poem. After the success of the *Musaddas* he yielded too readily to the temptation of using poetry as an instrument in the service of social reform, and some of his poems justly gave offence to the sophisticated sets of Lucknow. He had another, somewhat annoying, habit of putting the dullest verses in the beginning of his books, and they offer an easy target to those who wish to run down the author. Hali's works will gain by some pruning and omissions, but to those, who do not wish poetry to be merely an artisic plaything of clever brains, Hali must make a deep appeal. He has his dull moments, and he makes no attempt to enliven them by the tricks of the trade, but generally he gives beautiful poetry of a high order.

Today, Hali is not rated as highly as he was some thirty years ago. The self-confident, optimistic note of Iqbal makes a vigorous appeal to the younger generation, who (alas!) do not seem to be fully alive to the value of the spiritual discipline and ennobling self-purification of Hali. Those, however, who realise the importance of these, treasure him and at any rate the historic part which he played in the awakening of Muslim India in the nineteenth century cannot be forgotten. Iqbal ranked him along with Sir Syed, amongst the Makers of Modern Muslim India. In his Persian verses, written on the first centenary of Hali, he says:

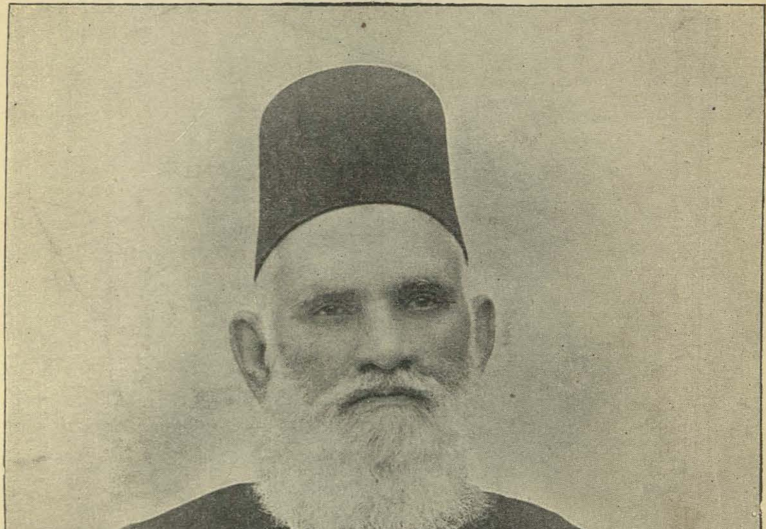
> The Tulip of the Desert (*i.e.*, the Muslim nation) encountered autumn and withered away.
> Syed [Ahmed] gave it a new life, with the dew of his morning tears,
> And Hali did not cease his heart-warming melodies,
> Until the bedewed Tulip had once again got its shining spot.

CHAPTER 4

MOHSIN-UL-MULK
(1837-1907)

WHEN Syed Ahmed died, the ship of the Aligarh College was tossing unsteadily. The College was under a heavy debt and the income was not even enough to cover the current expenditure. Many a magnificent edifice, commenced by the large-hearted Syed was standing incomplete, and the office of the College Secretary was daily besieged by an army of masons, labourers, and others, whose wages were in arrears. The collection of funds had greatly fallen since the fraud in the college funds, but now the institution was even failing to attract students. In 1895, there were 595 students on the rolls of the College ; on 31st March, 1898, *i.e.*, four days after the death of Sir Syed, the number had fallen to 343. Syed Ahmed struggled boldly with these difficulties but his old age, failing health and domestic misfortunes made it impossible for him to cope with them successfully. With his death the troubles multiplied. During his lifetime, Syed Ahmed had dominated the national scene like a Colossus, and there was a universal feeling that after his death his puny successors would not be able to carry on his work.

The administrative position was even more complicated. According to the Trustee Bill, Syed Mahmud, who was Joint Secretary, became, after the death of his father, Life Secretary of the College. His physical and mental decline now made it impossible for him to successfully fill any post of responsibility, but his legal status was unassailable, and anybody who displaced him would have to reckon with his active opposition. Syed Mahmud further increased his difficulties during the few days he was in office by quarrelling with almost everybody—including Beck, the all-powerful Principal of the College. The relations of the European staff and a section of the trustees continued to be strained. Syed



(p. 82) NAWAB MOHSIN-UL-MULK

Ahmed had brought a Trustee Bill to deal with this problem and Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan, the original critic of the European staff, severed his connection with the College when this bill became law, but he left a valiant successor in Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, and the difficulties continued.

The able administrator, who faced these difficulties and faced them so smoothly and successfully that people have all but forgotten this critical period in the history of the College, was Syed Mehdi Ali, generally known by his Hyderabad title 'Mohsin-ul-Mulk." He belonged to an ancient family of Barah Syeds who played an important part in shaping the fortunes of the Mughal dynasty and was born at Etawah on 9 December, 1887. Like Syed Ahmed, he was educated on old, orthodox lines and started life as a clerk on the monthly salary of Rs. 10! His intelligence and industry, however, overcame all initial obstacles, and when, in 1867, he competed for the Provincial Civil Service he headed the list of successful candidates, and was appointed a Deputy Collector in the United Provinces. As a civil servant he had a distinguished career and was picked up by Sir Salar Jang, the Prime Minister of Hyderabad, for a high appointment in the State. He spent nearly twenty-two years in the service of Hyderabad, and during this period, not only did he help in modernising the administrative machinery of the State but was also instrumental in gaining for the State an interest in the affairs of Indian Muslims. In 1893, he was pensioned off from the State service, and settled at Aligarh, to resume his active co-operation with his old friend Syed Ahmed, in the regeneration of the Indian Muslims.

On Syed Ahmed's death, Syed Mahmud worked as the Secretary of the College for some time, and after he had made a difficult situation even more difficult, the Trustees selected Mohsin-ul-Mulk for this crown of thorns. Never was a more satisfactory selection made. The measure of Mohsin-ul-Mulk's success as Secretary may be judged from the fact that while there were 343 students in the College when Syed Ahmed died, the number had risen to 800 at the time of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk's death. The half finished building was completed and new ones taken in hand.

The annual income of the College was doubled and nearly six lakhs were collected, in addition, to raise it to the level of a university. Besides, the College became a truly national institution. In Syed Ahmed's days, the *ulema* and the ultra-orthodox kept aloof from the College, but Mohsin-ul-Mulk won them over and many *ulama* visited the College and attended the annual sessions of the Educational Conference. The College was not only visited by the Prince of Wales—later H.M. King George V—but the Amir of Afghanistan, who after testing the boys in their knowledge of Quran and Islam, declared that those who criticised the College for indifference to religion were all 'liars.'

The causes of Mohsin-ul-Mulk's success are to be found in his tact, industry, shrewd commonsense, and deep devotion to his work. He was more than sixty when he took over the reins of office but he worked harder than most young men do. He toured extensively—including a month which he spent at Rangoon—to carry the message of Aligarh to his co-religionists and neglected no device to make the College more popular and more influential. But the real secret of his success lay in his disarming temperament, and sweet, winning personality. His Secretaryship after the tenure of that "Thrice-bitter Wahabi" was like the blowing of cool breeze after a stormy afternoon. Even in the old days of *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, while Syed Ahmed used to whip up enthusiasm —and even opposition!—for reform by his merciless criticism of his co-religionists, the tactful words of Mohsin-ul-Mulk applied balm to the wounds. He continued the same policy, when he became the Secretary of the College. Not only was he most considerate and tactful in matters of general policy, but was personally untiring in his efforts to work for the others.

Syed Ahmad had made it a principle—most unusual for an Eastern—never to give anybody a letter of recommendation. Mohsin-ul-Mulk's line of actionwas just the reverse. His pen poured a constant stream of letters, to help not only the college boys in getting jobs but in enabling others—*e.g.*, Shibli—to overcome their personal difficulties. About his work and temperament, Maulana Abdul Bari, a well-known religious leader, has written:

"We neither opposed nor supported Sir Syed actively. Our elders found themselves out of sympathy with his politics, even more than with his religious views, but owing to his obstinacy, fortified by a strong self-confidence, he would not give up his views and there were occasions for difference of opinion. To remedy this, a peace-loving person of high sensibility like Mohsin-ul-Mulk was needed and, thank God, he succeeded Sir Syed."[1]

Mohsin-ul-Mulk not only brought the *ulama* nearer to Aligarh, but he was also able to win some known political opponents of the founder of the College. When Syed Ahmed was delivering his speech at Muhammadan Educational Conference against the Indian National Congress, the annual session of that body was being presided over by (later Justice) Badr-ud-Din Tyabji. Naturally Tyabji had no sympathy for the Aligarh school of politics, and there was a public controversy between him and Syed Ahmed over Muslim attitude towards the Indian National Congress. After Syed Ahmed's death, however, Mohsin-ul-Mulk met Tyabji in Bombay and so completely won him over that in 1903 he actually presided over the annual session of the Muhammadan Educational Conference. Tyabji became a warm supporter of the Aligarh movement and said in a speech delivered shortly before his death:

"There is not a Musalman in India, certainly not in Bombay, who does not wish all prosperity and success to Aligarh."[2]

Mohsin-ul-Mulk was most peace-loving and accommodating of men, but by an irony of fate he had to take part in some active controversies and the first of these arose soon after he had taken charge of the College Secretaryship. We have already referred to the revival of Hindi-Urdu controversy shortly before Syed Ahmad's death, and the efforts made by the dying statesman to help the cause of Urdu. The reason for the revival of this controversy was that Sir Antony Macdonnel had come as the Governor of the United Provinces, and as he was known to have been instru-

1. Quoted in *Tazkirah-i-Mohsin*, p. 114.
2. Quoted in *Eminent Mussalmans*, (Natesan), p. 110.

mental in displacing Urdu in Bihar, the supporters of Hindi naturally hoped that he would repeat the performances here also. They were not to be altogether disappointed. On 18 April, 1900, the Government of the United Provinces passed orders about the use of Hindi, which ended the position of privilege which Urdu had occupied in Government offices for three quarters of a century. This greatly shook the Indian Muslims. For them Urdu is a dear possession, next in importance to Islam alone, and, as Mahatma Gandhi was to find later, they react sharply to any efforts which undermine the importance of this language—"the main relic of Hindu-Muslim cultural co-operation."

Mohsin-ul-Mulk was Syed Ahmed's successor, and on him lay, he felt, the responsibility of urging the Muslim point of view. He, therefore, organised an Urdu Defence Association, and began to arrange protest meetings. The first meeting was held at Aligarh on 13 May, and was presided over by Nawab Lutf Ali of Chhattari. This enraged the all-powerful Governor. He wrote to Syed Mahmud, criticising the organisation and, as a result, Nawab Lutf Ali resigned from the presidentship of the Urdu Defence Association. Mohsin-ul-Mulk was, however, unperturbed. He organised another meeting at Lucknow, which was very well-attended and showed unmistakably how strong the Muslim feeling was on this question.

This was too much for His Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor. He rushed to Aligarh, called a meeting of the Trustees of the College, and harangued them at length. He expressed his disapproval of what was being done and made it clear that if this public expression of views against his policy continued, the College would lose all assistance, financial and otherwise, which it was receiving from the Government.

His Excellency's attitude towards the Honorary Secretary of the College, personally, was even less worthy of a provincial Governor. When Mohsin-ul-Mulk, before holding the protest meetings, wanted to see him and explain the Muslim point of view on Urdu-Hindi question, he declined to meet him and told his

Private Secretary to reply that the purpose could be better served by correspondence. He, however, later accused the Nawab of starting an agitation against a decision of Government without communicating the Muslim views in advance. He showed pettiness even in addressing Mohsin-ul-Mulk. In 1887, the Governor-General in Council had officially recognised the title of "Mohsin-ul-Mulk," and had sanctioned its use in official correspondence and in any future transactions between Maulvi Mehdi Ali and British officials. After that the Central and the Provincial Governments had constantly used the title in addressing Maulvi Mehdi Ali. Sir Antony Macdonnel, however, now forbade its use, and when his attention was drawn to the orders of the Govenor-General in Council, he replied that the earlier sanction lapsed with the retirement of Mohsin-ul-Mulk from the service of the Nizam.

This was the state of affairs when Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk had to make a very bitter choice. It was obvious that if he continued the agitation in favour of Urdu, his continuance at the helm of the College would seriously affect its welfare. He had to choose between the Honorary Secretaryship of the College and an active movement against Government orders on Hindi-Urdu question. He thought over the matter and eight days after the meeting at Lucknow, submitted his resignation from the Secretaryship.

He was not, however, allowed to follow the course he had chosen. When the news of his resignation became known, there was a widespread agitation, pressing him to withdraw the resignation. Hali and Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk wrote strong personal letters, and other co-workers of Syed Ahmed expressed similar views. (Sir) Muzammal Ullah Khan, the Joint Secretary, wrote that Mohsin-ul-Mulk's departure from the College at this stage would be its death, and made it clear that if he did not show any consideration to the public request for withdrawal of his resignation, he himself would resign from the Joint Secretaryship. Even Syed Mahmud, who had originally written a letter to the Governor adversely commenting on the agitation carried on by the College

authorities, asked the Nawab to withdraw the resignation, and advised the Trustees to refuse to accept it.

Mohsin-ul-Mulk's hands were forced now. He had to bow to the pressure of his friends and co-workers, and he himself must have realised that with such a powerful "friend" of Muslim institutions as Sir Antony Macdonnel at the helm of provincial affairs, he would be exposing the College to grave risk, if he deserted his post at this stage. He, therefore, withdrew his resignation and as a natural corollary of that action, had to give up, for the time being, his efforts in the cause of Urdu.

Mohsin-ul-Mulk's withdrawal from the pro-Urdu front meant an early end of that movement but it had important repercussions. It did not immediately bring to the ground the grand edifice of the pro-British policy which Syed Ahmed had built after the efforts of a lifetime, but the building was badly shaken, and began to show big cracks. An essential condition for the success of Syed Ahmed's policy was that the Government should have due regard for the Muslim susceptibilities, but Sir Antony Macdonnel was completely oblivious of this. The decision on the Urdu-Hindi question, and particularly the high-handed manner in which the movement in favour of Urdu was suppressed, hurt all self-respecting Muslims and paved the way for the success of those who were opposed to Syed Ahmed's policy.

One important byproduct of this controversy was that Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, who, after his retirement from Hyderabad. had withdrawn himself to the seclusion of Amroha, re-emerged into activity and his influence in shaping Muslim affairs was just the reverse of what Sir Antony Macdonnel could have desired.

Mohsin-ul-Mulk also did not allow his love for Urdu to die out. When the angry heat of personal controversy had subsided and Sir Antony Macdonnel had left the province, he organised "Anjuman-i-Taraqqi-i-Urdu," as a wing of the Muhammadan Educational Conference. To guard against possible complications, (later Sir) Thomas Arnold was appointed its first Chairman, and,

though in the beginning its achievements were meagre, in the competent hands of Maulvi Abdul Haq, it became a magnificent organisation, not only for safeguarding the interest of Urdu languag but also for orderly growth and enrichment of Urdu literature.

Six years after the Urdu-Hindi controversy, Mohsin-ul-Mulk took part in another controversial affair, and here his efforts were much more successful. We have already given Syed Ahmed's views on representation by election andh,is fears for Muslims, if the system were introduced in India without any safeguards. He pinned his faith to nomination by Government so that minorities might also get a due share in administration. For the time being Syed Ahmed's plea was accepted, but in the beginning of this century Liberal Government came into power in England, and it appeared inevitable that a system of election would be introduced in Indian Legislative Councils. Indian leaders like Gokhale, R. C. Dutt. and others brought considerable pressure on the British Government, and the matter was discussed in Parliament and elsewhere. John Morely, while introducing the Indian budget in the House of Commons, referred to "the extension of the representative element in the Legislative Council." Lord Minto also, in a speech, gave an indication of the coming developments. Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who always kept himself well-informed about these matters, decided to take action, and was urged by a number of other Muslims to do so. He wrote to Viqar-ul-Mulk in an Urdu letter, which is undated, but must have been written between 10 and 18 August, 1906:

"Immediately on the receipt of your first letter, I addressed some selected people about the matter in question, and in particular, wrote to Archbold to inquire from the Viceroy as to whether he would receive a deputation for submission of the Muslim memorial."

The exact words of the Urdu letter, which gives a complete lie to the story of the Simla Deputation being a "Command Performance," are:

"کہ وہ وائسرائے کا منشا دریافت کریں کہ مسلمانوں کا میموریل اگر ڈیپوٹیشن لے کر آوے تو وہ اسے قبول کریں گے"؟[1]

Archbold, to whom a reference is made in the above letter, was the Principal of the Aligarh College, and was at that time spending his summer holidays at Simla. He contacted the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to get a reply to Mohsin-ul-Mulk's inquiry, and assured that officer of his own belief that the suggested deputation, while urging Muslim point of view, would not say anything disloyal. He communicated this to Mohsin-ul-Mulk at Bombay, and soon therefter received from the Private Secretary a letter communicating the Viceroy's consent to receive the deputation. Archbold wrote to Mohsin-ul-Mulk on 10 August, 1906:

"As I told you in my previous letter, I explained the position to Colonel Dunlop-Smith [*i.e.*, Private Secretary to the Viceroy] emphasising what I had to say in a subsequent letter. I assured him that I was certain that any address, that suggested Deputation might present, would contain nothing that was in any way disloyal and that I was also certain that the Mohammadans had no wish whatever to do anything that would cause difficulty to Government. At the same time, I explained the fears—reasonable fears—of the Mohammadans at the present time, to the best of my ability.

"Colonel Dunlop-Smith now writes to me to say that H. E. the Vicerory has decided to receive the Deputation of Mohammadans, if it is offered; and he asks me to say that a formal application must be sent in. He adds that a copy of the address, which is to be presented, must be sent to him, in the usual way, sometime before the date of the reception of the Deputation—at least two days, if possible."[2]

1. *Makatib* (*viz.*, Urdu letters exchanged between Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk), p, 95.

2. See an extract from Archbold's original English letter published as appendix (No. 19) to *Tazkirah-i-Mohsin* by M. A. Zuberi—*viz.*, the Urdu biography of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, pp. 13-14.

Originally Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk wanted that the formal application for the Deputation should be addressed by Muhammadan Political Association, Lucknow, of which Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk was to be the Secretary, but when it transpired that the Association had not yet come into existence, Mohsin-ul-Mulk took the entire work on himself. He wrote to (Sir) Syed Ali Imam of Patna, (later Justice) Shah Din of Lahore and Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk of Hyderabad to help him in drafting the memorial. Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk agreed and came to Bombay, where Mohsin-ul-Mulk was staying at that time, to assist him in drawing up the Muslim demands. The drafting of the memorial, which was very carefully done, took some time. Mohsin-ul-Mulk used to visit Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk at his Bombay residence every morning, and the two leaders would sit down and consider the various suggestions received from Muslim leaders, like Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, for inclusion in the Memorial. Archbold also sent some suggestions, but they appear to have been turned down. He was in favour of the deputation supporting the system of nomination, as in his opinion the time for introduction of election had not come, and Muslims would not get their due share under this system.[1] The Memorial, however, as is well known, after pointing out Muslim difficulties did not oppose the system of election, but only pressed for the election of a suitable number of Muslim representatives through separate electorates.

Besides, Archbold seems to have sent a draft of a formal application, presumably for the interview with the Viceroy, which contained expressions conveying Muslim assurance of "aloofness from political agitation in the future." Mohsin-ul-Mulk wrote back to say that nobody would like those expressions and dropped a hint that Muslim leaders should have a political organization. The relevant entry in Mohsin-ul-Mulk's

1. The summary of Archbold's entire letter, (dated August 10, 1908) as retranslated from Urdu and given on page 62 of *The Communal Triangle of India* by Ashoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan contains the following lines: "Personally I think it will be wise for the Muslims to support nomination, as time to experiment with elections has not yet come. In election it will be very difficult for the Muslims to secure their due share."

letter, dated 18th August, 1906, is as follows:

"Thanks for your letter of the fourteenth instant, together with a draft of the formal application. I am sending it to a few of my friends, but I am sure nobody will like the opening phrases which give an assurance of a deliberate aloofness from political agitation in the future. Probably also they will not like me to represent their cause to the Government without the means of a political organization. I shall, however, let you know what is decided."[1]

The memorial, as finally drawn up by two of the wisest and maturest leaders of Muslim India, was a model of moderation, restraint and political acumen. It is probably the best-written political document ever submitted by Indian Muslims, and was finally approved at a meeting of Muslim leaders held at Lucknow on 16 September, under the presidentship of (Sir) Abdul Rahim.

Next to the drafting of the Memorial, the most important question was the selection of the personnel of the deputation. This Mohsin-ul-Mulk accomplished with his usual thoroughness and sound judgment. He selected thirty-five names and made the deputation, the most influential and the most representative body of the Muslims, which had yet taken up their cause. Apart from His Highness the Aga Khan, the leader of the deputation, and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Hakim Ajmal Khan, (Sir) Ali Imam, (Sir) Mazammal Ullah Khan, (Sir) Rafi-ud-din Ahmed, (Sir) Mohammad Shafi, (Sir) Abdul Rahim, (Justice) Shah Din and a number of other distinguished Muslims formed the deputation, and laid their case before the Viceroy on 1st October, 1906.

The most important demand of the Deputation, as is well known, was for election of Muslim representatives to legislative councils and municipalities through separate electoral colleges, but it also asked for the employment of a due proportion of Muslims in Government service and appointment of Muslims to

1. Quoted in Wasti, S. R.: *Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1905 to 1910*, Appendix V, p. 231.

the High Courts and Chief Courts. The Viceroy who, as is customary, had received an advance copy of the memorandum submitted by the Deputation, gave a somewhat general but reassuring reply and undertook to safeguard the rights and interests of Muslims in any future constitutional changes.

The activities of Mohsin-ul-Mulk were adversely criticised by the Congress Press, and the communal electorates, which were introduced mainly as a result of the demand put forward by the Simla Deputation, have been a subject of keen controversy. No critic of separate electorates has, however, been able to suggest any effective alternative by which the interests of the minorities could be safeguarded in a country where the Hindus and the Muslims have been voting mainly for their co-religionists.

As a matter of fact the experience of Muslims under the Indian Councils Act of 1892 had been so unhappy that those who have studied the question understand the Muslim fears. At pages 82, 107, 113 and 240 of his book on Indian Muslims, Ram Gopal admits this. On page 107 he says, "Ever since the growth of developments which led to the enactment of the Indian Councils Act of 1892, Muslim communalism had been growing slowly and steadily, and took a definite organized shape in 1906. Rightly did Muslims begin to entertain the fear that they could not get representation on the Councils even in proportion to their population, for the 1892 Councils gave them under-representation."[1] Elsewhere he speaks of "the peculiar method of franchise, which left the Muslims practically unrepresented in the 1892 Councils."[2] It is interesting to recall that in early eighties at least one eminent Hindu politician (Rai Rajendra Lal Mitra, C.I.E.) visualised the possibility of separate Hindu and Muslim Panchayats.[3]

Actually the Simla Deputation by suggesting a procedure, under which the Muslims could secure genuine representation, without clinging to the official nomination, facilitated the introduction of the system of election in India, and there is no wonder

1. Ram Gopal : *Indian Muslims, A Political History, 1858-1947*, p. 107.
2. *Ibid*., p. 240.
3. *Ibid*., pp. 38-39.

that leaders like Gokhale did not object to its basic proposals.

After the work of the Deputation was over, Mohsin-ul-Mulk got busy with the organisation of a Muslim Political Organisation. Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk had been struggling with a scheme for four or five years, but owing to provincial and personal jealousies was unable to accomplish much. The success of the Deputation, however, inspired new hopes, and it became essential, even to continue the work of Deputation, to have a permanent organisation. After some correspondence between Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk on the one hand and H.H. the Agha Khan and Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk on the other, a meeting of Muslim leaders was held on 30 December, 1906, at Dacca, where the All-India Muslim Educational Conference was holding its annual sessions, and it was decided to organise the All-India Muslim League. Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk were appointed to draft its constitution. His Highness the Agha Khan was to be the permanent President. Mohsin-ul-Mulk was, however, unable to do more than preliminary spade work for the League, as he passed away before its first formal session was held at Karachi.

The last days of Mohsin-ul-Mulk were embittered by the strained relations between the European staff and the College students, which culminated in a strike by the students. Luckily he was able to see the affair amicably settled, before his end came' but there is no doubt that it shook him badly. He was now well-advanced in years, and a constitution which was never very robust was giving way. Towards the end of September, he left for Simla, where details about the proposed reforms and Muslim share in the new arrangements were under discussion. He met the Viceroy and carried on negotiations with other officers. This stay, however, at a high altitude was too much for a badly damaged heart and Mohsin-ul-Mulk fell seriously ill in the beginning of October. He passed away on 16 October, 1907, at a place which was the scene of his greatest political triumph. He had expressed a desire to be buried in his family burial ground at Etawah, but the Trustees of the College—with the full support of Muslim India—decided to ignore these wishes and he was laid to

rest at Aligarh by the side of his former chief and co-worker.

Shortly after Mohsin-ul-Mulk died, the annual session of the Muhammadan Educational Conference was held, with Hali in the chair. The death of the departed leader cast a gloom over the assembled delegates, but it was realised by all that by securing separate electorates for the Muslims, Mohsin-ul-Mulk had achieved something of a fundamental and far-reaching importance. In a short poem, Hali paid a tribute, which the late Nawab would have valued most, and which he deserved so richly :

وہ ملک کا محسن وہ مسلمانوں کا غمخوار
سر کرکے مہم قوم کے کام آ گیا آخر!

He was a benefactor of the people, a friend of the Muslims.
He fell a martyr—but not before the battle had been won!

CHAPTER 5

THE BEGINNINGS IN BENGAL

BENGAL was the province with the largest Muslim population but perhaps nowhere else was the Muslim position so worse in political, economic and educational spheres. This was the first province to fall under foreign domination and the new authority was not even that of a foreign government but of a commercial concern without any standards or rules and regulations of a civilized government. Muslims suffered in particular, because, as explained by Pannikar, the events at Plassey were the outcome of a combination between the military strength of the East India Company and the financial support of the Jaggat Seths of Murshidabad. This Hindu-British alliance remained in operation to the detriment of the Muslims.[1]

damage

THE RUIN OF MUSLIM BENGAL

Pannikar has described the administration which Clive established in Bengal after the battle of Plassey (1757) as "robber State the one object of which was to extract as much as possible from the territories it was supposed to administer".[2] This state of affairs is supposed to have ended by the Regulating Act of 1773 but if the situation is closely studied, it appears that for more than a whole century measures were taken systematically which would be a blot on any civilized administration and which ground down the vast bulk of Muslim population to abject poverty. The subject has been studied by Dr. A. R. Malik in his *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal (1757-1856)*. The book is a most revealing study—especially the long chapter dealing with the economic

1. Pannikar, K.M., *A Survey of Indian History*, (5th Edn.), pp. 244-45 and p. 282.

2, *Ibid.*, p. 246.



(p. 96) NAWAB SIR SALIM ULLAH KHAN

conditions. It outlines the effects of the Permanent Settlement, how in the words of James O'Kinealy the new system "elevated the Hindu collectors who up to that time had held but unimportant posts, to the position of landholders, gave them a proprietory right in the soil and allowed them to accumulate wealth which would have gone to the Musalmans under their own rule."[1] Next, it deals with Resumption proceedings, under which the grants made by the previous rulers to Muslims were systematically resumed. As an inducement to exertion, the Collectors were allowed 25 per cent commission on the first year's revenue of any plot thus recovered.[2] Special Deputy Collectors were appointed to carry out these operations, and a large number of cases were decided *ex parte*, in favour of the Government. One special Deputy Collector, Tayler of Burdwan, passed decision in 429 cases *ex parte*, in one day. The junior Member of the Board of Revenue, commenting on the report of Chittagong resumptions, stated that he was not surprised to see the *Lakhirajdars* of the place suspicious of Government's intentions. "Indeed it is no more than natural," wrote he, "that they should distrust Tribunals of Resumption, after the specimen they experienced, in a file of 14,863 suits having one and all been decided in favour of Government and in their absence."[3] In 1838 the Directors of East India Company realised "that great injustice" had been inflicted "by the extensive resumption of lands without due, and in many cases, without any investigation as to the right of the parties in possession."[4] But the proceedings did not close till 1852.

The new rules for appointment to posts under the government also hit the Muslims adversely. Dr. Malik had examined the list of candidates qualified for government appointments, and found not a single Muslim name in the lists for the years 1845 to 1852 and again for 1853-55.[5]

Next, he describes what the lower class—viz., the peasants

1. Malik, A.R., *The British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal, 1757-1856*. p. 34.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

and the weavers—had to suffer. Indigo plantation was extensive in Muslim areas and as a high proportion of Muslim population consisted of cultivators, the evils connected with indigo plantation were the fate of a large number of Muslims. The position of the weavers who constituted the other major section of the Muslims was equally bad. The agents of the East India Company forced the weavers to sign bonds to supply goods within a specified time and the prices paid were 15 per cent or even 40 per cent less than the market rate. Later, to encourage the British manufactures, the East India Company adopted a policy of discouraging finished products from India and the value of goods for export, manufactured at Dacca alone, fell from Rs. 12 lakhs in 1799 to only 3½ lakhs of rupees in 1813. This decline continued and by 1854 the manufacture of muslin for which Beng alwas famous, had practically ceased.[1]

Another modern historian has studied the relationship between the Hindus and Muslims of Bengal in the 19th century. Dr. R. C. Majumdar has contested the view "that the Hindus and Muslims had coalesced into an Indian people". He records that the vernacular newspapers of the early 19th century referred to Muslims as "*Yavana Jati*" and made a clear distinction between them and the Hindus. He has detailed the differences separating the two communities and as his remarks apply to other areas also, a long quotation may not be out of place.

"A fundamental and basic difference between the two communities was apparent even to a casual observer. Religious and social ideas and institutions counted far more in men's lives in those days than anything else; and in these two respects the two differed as poles asunder. The worship of images which formed the most cherished element in the religious beliefs of the Hindus was an anathema in the eyes of the Muslims and the long tradition of ruthless desecration of temples by them for nearly a thousand years formed a wide gulf between the two. The

1. Malik, A.R., *The British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal, 1757-1856*, p. 58.

method of congregational prayer by the Muslims was a thing unknown to the Hindus, and the ceremonial worship of the Hindus to the accompaniment of music, both vocal and instrumental, was not only alien to the Muslims but positively distasteful and irksome to them. The temples and mosques were built in purely Hindu and Muslim styles and were not influenced by each other to the least degree. As regards social institutions, the caste-ridden Hindu society was an enigma to the Muslims, while the food of the latter, particularly beef and onion, was looked upon with aversion by the Hindus. Other customs like *Sati* and untouchability among the Hindus and widow-marriage and marriage between first cousins among the Muslims, as well as those of lesser importance like the funeral ceremonies, dress, etc., created a permanent cleavage between the two. The literary and intellectual tradition of the two communities ran on entirely different lines, and they were educated in different institutions, *Tols* and *Madrassas*. The Muslims drew their inspiration from Quran and Arabic and Persian literature. A number of Hindus knew Persian, and a few learnt Arabic, but the Hindu mind was nurtured from the boyhood on Sanskrit, particularly religious literature like the Epics and the Puranas. It is a strange phenomenon that although the Muslims and Hindus had lived together in Bengal for nearly six hundred years, the average people of each community knew so little of the other's traditions."[1]

Dr. Majumdar goes on to say that the Hindus treated the Muslim masses like the low caste of their own society:

"The Hindus believed that the majority of the Muslims in Bengal were converts from the lowest strata of Hindu society. How far this belief was historically correct need not be discussed in the present context. But the belief was there, and there is no doubt that the upper class Hindus treated the Muslim masses like the low castes of their own society."[2]

1. Majumdar, R.C., *The Glimpses of Bengal in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 5-6.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

It was quite customary in those days for Bengali Hindu leaders to attribute all their misfortunes to the Muslim rule. A quotation from Dwarakanath Tagore, by no means a bigoted Hindu, would suffice :

"The present characteristic failings of natives are a want of truth, a want of integrity, a want of independence. These were not the characteristics of former days, before the religion was corrupted and education had disappeared. It is to the Mahomedan conquest that these evils are owing, and they are the invariable results of the loss of liberty and national degradation. The Mahomedans introduced in this country all the vices of an ignorant, intolerant and licentious soldiery. The utter destruction of learning and science was an invariable part of their system, and the conquered, no longer able to protect their lives by arms and independence, fell into opposite extremes of abject submission, deceit and fraud. Such has been the condition of the natives of Hindustan for centuries."[1]

These comments shed a lurid light on the relations between the Hindus and the Muslims of Bengal in the nineteenth century. Dr. Majumdar also gives some revealing details about the Muslim position in respect of modern education. He says that although an English class was established in the Calcutta Madrassa as early as 1826, only two students passed the junior scholarship examination during the next 25 years. He goes on to say, "The comparative position of the Hindus and Muslims in English education will be evident from some figures quoted in the *Amritabazar Patrika* of August 12, 1869, from the Education Reports of the years 1865 and 1867. In 1865, 9 Hindus and no Muhammadan passed the M. A. Examination, 41 Hindus and 1 Muhammadan passed the B.A., and 17 students, all Hindus, passed the Law Examination. All the Medical graduates were also Hindus. In 1867, 88 Hindus, and not a single Muhammadan passed the M.A., and B.A., Examination."[2]

1 Majumdar, R.C., *The Glimpses of Bengal in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 20.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 50.

HAJI MUHAMMAD MOHSIN
(1730–1812)

The history of the Muslims of Bengal in the nineteenth century is one of the darkest chapters of the history of the sub-continent, but there were some glimmers of light even during this period. One venerable personality, whose figure shines like a beacon of light, was that of Haji Muhammad Mohsin, after whom the famous Mohsin Fund of Bengal is named. He was born in 1730 at Hugli in a family of Irani businessman and in 1803 became the sole heir of the large property bequeathed by his step-sister, Manno Jan Khanum. Three years later, after retaining enough property to bring him a monthly income of Rs. 100/-, he endowed his entire estate, which even in those days brought an annual income of Rs. 45,000/- as a Waqf. Mohsin Waqf was registered on 28 April, 1806 and six years later Haji Muhammad Mohsin died at the ripe age of eighty-two. After him the Waqf was mismanaged and was taken over by the Board of Revenue. The Government, however, diverted its income to general education and established Hugli College in 1836 with the help of funds coming largely from Mohsin Fund. For thirty-seven years the Fund was used for a purpose from which main beneficiaries were non-Muslims, but in 1873 thanks to efforts of Sir William Hunter, Nawab Abdul Latif and others, money became available for the Muslims. In that year it was decided that Government itself would pay for the maintenance of Hugli College, while the income from the Mohsin Fund would be spent on establishing *Madrassas* at Dacca, Chittagong, Rajshahi and part of the funds would be reserved for modern education of Bengal Muslims. The Government, now, made arrangements under which two-thirds of the fees of any Muslim student studying in any modern school or college of Bengal was paid out of the Mohsin Fund.

NAWAB ABDUL LATIF
(1828–1893)

The next prominent name among Muslims of modern Bengal is that of Nawab Abdul Latif, C.I.E. (1828-93). He belonged to

an old family of Qazis in what is now Faridpur District. His father compiled a book in Persian on universal history (entitled *Jami-at-Tawarikh*) which was repeatedly lithographed at Lucknow. His brother, Maulvi Abdul Ghafar Nassakh was a well-known Urdu poet and the author of a number of books in prose, including two biographical works on Urdu and Persian poets which contain some interesting information about literary figures of contemporary Bengal.

Nawab Abdul Latif received his higher education at Calcutta Madrassa, but also learnt English from a missionary. After holding some miscellaneous appointments, including that of a Private Secretary to one of the exiled Amirs of Sind, who were political prisoners at Calcutta, he became a Deputy Magistrate in 1849, and continued in the provincial civil service till his retirement in 1887. In the meanwhile he had been associated with the Bengal Legislative Council, to which he was nominated in 1862, being the first Muslim to be appointed its member. He was nominated for two more terms, in 1866 and 1872. In this capacity, he was associated with many legislative measures, and rendered useful service in stopping the mismanagement of Mohsin Fund, which was being largely used for giving stipends to the Hindu students of the Hugli College. In 1860 he started Muhammadan Literary Society at Calcutta. It included distinguished scholars and noblemen amongst its members and received official patronage. Some interesting papers were read before the Society—like Sir Syed's lecture (delivered in Persian) on the spread of education, and Maulvi Karamat Ali Jaunpuri's lecture on the current controversy, relating to India being a *dar-ul-harab*—but unlike the Aligarh movement the Society had no Hali to carry its message to the masses, and remained practically a literary club for the elite. What was even more unfortunate was that Nawab Abdul Latif and his colleagues opposed and criticised other leaders, like Amir Ali, working for the uplift of the Muslims. The Nawab belonged to a world which was changing fast, but he deserves to be remembered not only on account of what he achieved himself but also because of his illustrious family. A list of his descendants and their spouses makes a veritable "Who's who" of modern Muslim

Bengal. One of his grand daughters married A. K. Fazlul Haq. Another was married to Sir Hasan Suhrawardy, a member of another illustrious family of Muslim Bengal and the father of Begum Shaista Ikramullah, the talented wife of the first Foreign Secretary of Pakistan.

NUMERICAL EXPANSION OF ISLAM

When Nawab Abdul Latif started his Literary Society in the metropolis, far-reaching developments were taking place in eastern parts of the province. In the first half of the century this area had been the scene of the activities of the Faraizi leaders, Haji Shariat Ullah (1781-1840) and his son Dudu Mian (1819-62) and some very dedicated disciples of Maulana Sayyid Ahmed Brelvi-like, Maulvi Inayat Ali of Patna (1800-58), Maulvi Imam Din of Noakhali, Sufi Nur Muhammad of Chittagong. Their activities led to a great revival of Islam, resulting not only in discarding of Hindu practices prevalent among the peasantry, but also in adoption of a self-assertive attitude towards the Hindu landlords and a rebellious attitude towards the British government. Eastern and Central districts of Bengal were the main recruiting ground for Jehad against the Sikhs and later against the British. With the adoption of severer measures against these activities following the "Wahabi" Conspiracy cases at Patna (1865), Malda (1870). Rajmahal (1870) and elsewhere, as well as propagation of a moderate approach by preachers like Maulvi Karamat Ali (d. 1873) and his son and certain ameliorative steps taken by the government, less dramatic but basically more important development took place. Ram Gopal, who following Hunter calls the religious workers in Bengal "Wahabis" (although mostly they represented the offshoot of the reform movement started by Shah Wali Ullah), says, "The abandonment of that (rebellious) movement in the early seventies quickened the pace of conversion, because the Wahabis were now in a position to devote exclusive attention to the spread of Islam."[1] The results of the new efforts can best be summarised in the words of O'Donnell, who wrote the Census report for the

1. Ram Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

area in 1891.

"It is satisfactorily proved that since 1872 out of every 10,000 persons, Islam has gained 100 persons in Northern Bengal, 262 in Eastern Bengal, and 110 in Western Bengal—on an average 157 in the whole of Bengal proper. The Mussalman increase is real and large. If it were to continue, the faith of Muhammad would be universal in Bengal proper in six and a half centuries, whilst Eastern Bengal would reach the same condition in about four hundred years . . . Nineteen years ago in Bengal proper Hindus numbered nearly half a million more than Mussalmans did, and in the space of less than two decades the Mussalmans have not only overtaken the Hindus, but have surpassed them by a million and a half."[1]

SYED AMIR ALI
(1849–1928)

Much more important and active than the Muhammadan Literary Society was the Central National Muhammadan Association, which was started by that great author, jurist and man-of-affairs, Syed Amir Ali at Calcutta. Syed Amir Ali was born in 1849 at Chinsurah, the former Dutch sattlement on the banks of Hugli. A brilliant student throughout his educational career, he received help from the famous Mohsin Fund and some years later was sent to England as a state scholar by the Government of India. He studied law and was called to the bar in 1873. On return to Calcutta he started practice and soon made a name for himself. In 1874 he was elected a Fellow of the Calcutta University, and next year became Lecturer on Muhammadan Law at the Presidency College. In 1878 he was appointed Presidency Magistrate, but resigned the post three years later, to resume legal practice. In 1890 he became a Judge of the Calcutta High Court, the second Muslim to be selected for such a high judicial appointment, the first being Syed Mahmud, son of Syed Ahmed Khan. In 1904 he retired after 14 years' service and settled in England to devote

1. Quoted by Ram Gopal, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

himself to the service of his people in literary and political fields. In 1909, he became a Privy Councillor, the first Indian to achieve the signal honour.

Today the world knows Syed Amir Ali primarily as the renowned author of *The Spirit of Islam*[1] and *A Short History of the Saracens*, but his services to his people in the political sphere were also noteworthy. In England he was Muslim India's vigilant, active and resourceful champion. Even in India he had worked hard to organize them and for this purpose started the Central National Muhammadan Association in 1877. He tried to enlist the support of Syed Ahmed Khan, but the latter wished to concentrate on education and believed politics to be a dangerous game at that stage of national life. Without a band of workers, whom Syed Ahmed was able to attract, and perhaps lacking his capacity for leadership, Amir Ali did not achieve all the success he deserved, but he worked hard and systematically. He organized the branches of the Association at various places, but could not kindle general enthusiasm for his cause. Still, the organization has many notable achievements to its credit. In 1882 the Association submitted a comprehensive memorial to Lord Ripon, describing in detail the condition of the Muslims and seeking remedial measures. About this memorial, and the reply received from Lord Ripon's successor, it has been said that "prior to Lord Minto's memorable reply to the Muhammadan deputation which waited on him at Simla on 1st October, 1906 the most important declaration of policy emanating from the head of the Indian Government in regard to Muslims was the notable resolution issued by Lord Dufferin on the memorial of Central National Mohammadan Association." The Association which had 13 branches in 1885 was able to build up, in the course of next three years, 53 branches in the various parts of the sub-continent, but general enthusiasm was lacking, and after Amir Ali's departure for England in 1904, it gradually ceased to function.

1. A Western scholar who collected figures in the course of a survey of modern Arabic literature found that in Muslim Egypt "*Spirit of Islam* is the most widely quoted modern book on religion", Smith, W. C, *Modern Islam in India*, p. 56.

In spite of his differences with Syed Ahmed Khan regarding the need for a political organization, Amir Ali co-operated with Aligarh leaders, and presided over the thirteenth session of All-India Muslim Educational Conference, held at Calcutta in 1899. This co-operation became more fruitful after All-India Muslim League was formed, and Amir Ali established an active branch in London. This branch which was organized as early as 6 May, 1908, had Amir Ali as its President, while the Committee included Dr. Iqbal, Dr. Ansari, and some other young Muslims who were in England for their education. The part Amir Ali played in holding the British government to Lord Minto's promise regarding separate electorate will be dealt with elsewhere. After an active, distinguished and fruitful career he passed away in 1928.

NAWAB SALIM ULLAH

Muslims in Bengal became politically more conscious when Bengal was partitioned by Lord Curzon, and the Hindus started a vigorous agitation to undo the measure. The setting up of the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, where Muslims would be in the majority, stirred hopes and a new political life started in which the central figure was that of Nawab Sir Salim Ullah Khan of Dacca. Born in 1884,[1] he was a scion of the Dacca Nawab family which was known for its philanthropy and had made solid contributions to the civil amenities of Dacca. His grandfather, Sir Abdul Ghani had paid for the Dacca Water Works, while his father, Sir Ahsan Ullah Khan, provided funds for fitting streets and roads of the city with electric lights. On the death of his father in 1901, he succeeded to his father's estate and received the title of *Nawab Bahadur* in 1903. As a young man he was greatly interested in *Milad* gatherings, holding them in each Mohalla of Dacca, and himself reciting *Na'ats* at some of them. He also maintained his family's tradition of philanthropic works. Soon political activity in a larger sphere attracted him.

As heir to the premier Muslim Zamindari in East Bengal,

1. Based on *Mashahir-i-Kashmir*, by Fauq, p. 154.

Nawab Salim Ullah held a very important position which increased in importance after Dacca became the capital of Eastern Bengal and Assam. The agitation against the new province brought the Nawab in the centre of events. He could not join Simla Deputation, owing to illness but soon thereafter extended a personal invitation to Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk to hold the next session of All-India Muslim Educational Conference at Dacca. Hitherto, except for a session of the Conference held at Calcutta, then capital of India, Bengal had largely remained outside the orbit of the Aligarh Movement. Nawab's invitation brought Aligarh leadership to the heart of Muslim Bengal, and a session was held, which marked a turning point in the history of the subcontinent. Before the Conference was held the Nawab circulated among the delegates a scheme for "the Muslim All-India Confederacy", suggesting the formation of a political organization for protecting and promulgating the Muslim cause. The elaborate arrangements which the Nawab made for the ensuing Conference, which was held at Dacca in the last week of 1906, were long remembered by the participants. It also became a landmark in the history of Muslim India. After the Conference, the delegates met on 30 December, 1906, to consider the Nawab's scheme, and decided to form the All-India Muslim League. The Nawab explained his scheme, and moved the main resolution, which was seconded by Hakim Ajmal Khan, and after being supported by several speakers was duly adopted. It read:

"Resolved that this meeting composed of Musalmans from all parts of India, assembled at Dacca decided that a Political Association be formed styled All-India Moslem League, for the furtherance of the following objects:

(a) To promote, among the Musalmans of India, feelings of loyalty to the British Government, and to remove any misconception that may arise as to the intention of the Government with regard to any of its measures.

(b) To protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Musalmans of India, and to respectfully represent their

needs and aspirations to the Government.

(c) To prevent the rise, among the Musalmans of India, of any feeling of hostility towards other communities, without prejudice to the other aforementioned objects of the League."[1]

In due course, Nawab Salim Ullah toured the province and addressed meetings at various places in an effort to organize Muslims of Bengal. Another leader active in East Bengal was Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhri, the grandfather of Muhammad Ali of Bogra, the third Prime Minister of Pakistan. When the Provincial Muslim League for the Eastern Bengal was instituted at Dacca, Maulvi Kazim Uddin became its President and Nawab Salim Ullah Khan its Secretary. In 1908 the Nawab presided at the annual session of All-India Muslim Educational Conference held at Amritsar. As this city had a number of well-to-do Kashmiri families, and the Nawab's ancestors had migrated to Dacca from Kashmir, he received a great welcome and donated liberally to local charities. His last days, however, were far from happy. In December 1911, annulment of the partition of Bengal was announced, which deeply hurt him. He presided at the annual session of the Muslim League held in Calcutta on March 3, 1912. "The President of the session remarked in his address that the cancellation of the partition of Bengal was effected without reference or information to the Musalmans, but due to their faithfulness and loyalty they put up with it. In fact, the Nawab was deeply moved by the event and after the completion of his address he announced his decision to withhold his services to his community." Thereafter he did not participate in political activity and after suffering another blow in the death of his son, passed away on 16 January, 1915.

Nawab Salim Ullah Khan died broken-hearted, at a comparatively early age, but the seeds he had helped to sow bore fruit. Not only did he contribute to the foundation of the All-India Muslim League but the political life which he generated in

1. Quoted in Wasti, S.R., *op. cit.*, p. 79.

Eastern Bengal did not die out. Hitherto, his family had remained aloof from politics. He broke the spell, and many members of his family—like Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din and Khwaja Shahab-ud-Din, his sister's sons—followed in his footsteps. He inspired many others including Maulvi A.K. Fazlul Haq[1] who took up the torch from his hand and helped to usher a new dawn in a badly neglected area.

1. In 1955 Dacca University conferred an honorary degree on A.K. Fazlul Haq. On this occasion he made a speech, in which he referred to Nawab Salim Ullan as his political mentor, and also said that his dream was to see Dacca University blossom forth as another Aligarh.

CHAPTER 6

VIQAR-UL-MULK

(1841—1917)

SOON after Mohsin-ul-Mulk's death, far-reaching changes took place in the administration of the Aligarh College and even in the political policy of Indian Muslims. These changes were due partly to a few incidents, which we shall describe in the coming pages, and partly to certain developments in the general outlook of Muslim India but perhaps the most important single factor responsible of them was the personality of Mohsin-ul-Mulk's successor.

Nawab Viqur-ul-Mulk, who was unanimously elected Secretary of the Aligarh College on the death of Mohsin-ul-Mulk, was temperamentally akin to Syed Ahmed Khan. He was direct, straightforward—even brusque,—but Sir Syed, who had seen the dark days of the terror which stalked the streets of Delhi after British reoccupation in 1857, had a very cool head to match his stout heart. His policy of Anglo-Muslim friendship was subjected to a severe strain, but he allowed neither the personal nor the national grievances to deflect him from a course which he considered essential to the well-being of Muslim India. His son, Justice Syed Mahmud, had to leave the Bench of Allahabad High Court after differences with the Chief Justice which were essentially "racial" in their origin. Sir Syed—indeed the entire Muslim India—was sorely hurt at Gladstone's policy towards the Sultan of Turkey. But Sir Syed was convinced that against the rising tide of Hindu communalism, which was being fed by Tilak in the Deccan and Bankim Chander Chatterjee in Bengal, Anglo-Muslim friendship was the main hope of the Muslims – especially in the conditions which existed at his day—and in spite of many temptations to the contrary, he continued to work for it.

In this, Viqar-ul-Mulk differed from him. He also was a clear-headed politician, and valued Anglo-Muslim friendship. But he was not prepared to pay any price for it. He lacked Sir Syed's patience and his goodwill towards the European staff of the Aligarh College. Thus, when occasions arose, when the European staff seemed to be making unfair demands, or when Government appeared to be oblivious of the sentiments of Indian Muslims, Viqar-ul-Mulk had no hesitation in departing from the path followed by Sir Syed and Mohsin-ul-Mulk.

Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, whose real name was Mushtaq Hussain, was born in 1841, at a village in Moradabad District of United Provinces. Like Syed Ahmed and Mohsin-ul-Mtlk, he had to begin life at the lowest rung of the ladder. His first job was at Rs. 10/- per mensem, as a temporary assistant teacher. In 1861, there was a widespread famine in Moradabad, and Syed Ahmed, who was in charge of relief arrangements, appointed Viqar-ul-Mulk to look after the poor-house of Amroha, where he performed his duties with great zeal and integrity. After this he reverted to the clerical line, and was reader to Syed Ahmed when he was Sub-Judge at Aligarh. He took active part in the educational efforts of his chief, and apart from assisting him in the management of the printing press and the office of the Scientific Society, collaborated in the translation of a book on "French Revolution and Napoleon."

When Syed Ahmed was transferred from Aligarh to Benares, he was succeeded as Sub-Judge by Maulvi Sami-Ullah Khan, and thus Viqar-ul-Mulk had an opportunity of serving under two principal figures of the Aligarh College. He worked longer under Maulvi Sami-Ulluh Khan, and as both had much in common, they became friends and co-workers for life. In 1870, the Society for Promotion of Education amongst Muslims invited contributions for a prize essay on the education of the Muslims, and out of the essays, sent in response to his advertisement, Mohsin-ul-Mulk's contribution was judged to be the best and Viqar-ul-Mulk was placed second on the list. When, in 1873, the College Foundation Committee decided to open an elementary

school at Aligarh, which in Syed Ahmed's absence was to be looked after by Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan, at that time the Secretary of the Aligarh branch, Viqar-ul-Mulk was his right hand man in running the institution.

In 1875, he followed Mohsin-ul-Mulk to Hyderabad and with a short break continued to hold high appointments in that state till 1892, when he had to resign owing to a local intrigue. During his service at Hyderabad, he continued to take an active interest in the affairs of the Aligarh College, and when controversy arose between Syed Ahmed and Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan over some provisions of the Trustee Bill, he gave powerful support to Maulvi Sahib. He, however, did not join him in leaving the College Committee and although his personal view regarding the position of the European staff, etc., did not undergo any change, he continued his connection with the College.

After his retirement from Hyderabad he settled down at Amroha, and for a long time did not take any active part in public affairs. In 1900, however, when controversy arose between Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Sir Antony Macdonnel, he was moved into activity. He, at first, tried to see the Lieutenant-Governor and personally explain the case for Urdu, but when his Excellency declined to grant any interview, he took part in the short-lived but vigorous agitation against Government orders. Soon after this, Mohsin-ul-Mulk wrote an article in the *Aligarh Institute Gazette* on "What should be done by the Muslims to safeguard their political interests" and suggested that "the Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association" started by Sir Syed and Theodore Beck in 1893, should be revived. Viqar-ul-Mulk immediately started correspondence with Mohsin-ul-Mulk on the point, and after mutual consultation, it was decided that Viqar-ul-Mulk should take up the formation of a political organisation. The first meeting in furtherance of the proposal was held at Lucknow in October 1901, and later Viqar-ul-Mulk toured the country for securing public support. The progress, however, was very slow and, as we have seen, a Muslim political organisation did not come into existence till after the Simla Deputation,

organised by Mohsin-ul-Mulk, had given an inspiring lead some six years later.

Side by side with this, Viqar-ul-Mulk started taking active interest in the College affairs. Owing to difference in temperament and outlook, he and Mohsin-ul-Mulk did not see eye to eye on many matters of the college administration but they continued to work together and on Mohsin-ul-Mulk's death, in 1907, he was elected the Secretary of the Board of Trustees.

One of the first important questions which Viqar-ul-Mulk had to handle was the question of the powers of the College principal and the European staff. This was an old skeleton in the College cupboard and as it affected the working of the Aligarh College over a number of years, and had repercussions even on our national life, perhaps a detailed account may not be out of place. The question had been a source of anxiety since Syed Ahmed's days. Originally the trouble arose over some boarders beating hostel servants and when after repeated warnings by Syed Ahmed and the College staff, they did not improve, disciplinary action was taken against one of them. As a protest, many others (including a ward of Viqar-ul-Mulk) left the College hostel, and went to stay in a *serai* (an inn) in the town. On this Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan who, apart from Syed Mahmud, was Syed Ahmed's principal co-worker in early days of the College and was paying special attention to the welfare of the boarders, intervened. Syed Ahmed wanted to have the question settled amicably, but now Beck, Principal of the College, struck out for maintenance of full discipline, and objected to the members of the managing committee intervening in administrative matters. All the European staff supported him and even threatened to resign if they were not allowed to work on what they considered sound administrative lines. This led to a complete rupture between the European staff and Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan, who now began to attack the very principle of "a Muslim boarding house being entrusted to a Christian" European Principal. He even objected to the appointment of highly paid European professors on grounds of economy. This controversy frightened the European staff, or at least gave them

a handle. They began to urge that their work would become impossible if, after Sir Syed, the affairs of the College passed into the hands of Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan, or if their position was not made secure under the College constitution. They, therefore, demanded statutory safeguards for themselves, and suggested that Syed Mahmud, who had attracted most of them to Aligarh, should be made Joint Secretary so that he could succeed Sir Syed after his death.

Some "highly placed Government officers" supported the proposal, and after considerable hesitation, Syed Ahmed agreed to include them in a Trustee Bill, drafted for reorganisation of the College constitution. This Bill was passed by the College Committee after a bitter controversy, and Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan severed his connections with the College.

During Mohsin-ul-Mulk's regime the difficulties increased. Under the Trustee Bill, the principal had been given wide powers of internal administration. Now Sir Antony Macdonnel, the Governor of the Province, began to correspond directly with him, and supported him even against the Secretary. On the other hand, active dissatisfaction with many measures of College administration was growing in an influential section of the College students and old boys—including Maulana Muhammad Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali. This section had the support of Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk who was with Sami Ullah in opposing the Trustee Bill, but had not, like him, resigned from the College Committee. The differences between the staff and the students took a serious turn in 1907, when there was a strike by the College students, which shook the College to its foundations. This was a great blow to Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who, however, got over the crisis by appointing an Inquiry Commission, which settled the immediate question amicably. The Commission however did not deal with the controversial question of the powers of the principal. This had to be tackled after Mohsin-ul-Mulk's death by Viqar-ul-Mulk, and looking to his lifelong associations with Maulvi Sami Uullah Khan and his firm, strong bent of mind there could be no doubt about the lines on which he would settle it.

Viqar-ul-Mulk was elected Honorary Secretary of the College on 15 December, 1907, and soon matters between him and Principal Archbold came to a head. On some questions, it is true the Principal was in the right, but he exhibited complete lack of imagination and tact, and forgot that he was dealing with a man of a temperament quite different from that of Mohsin-ul-Mulk. There was daily difference of opinion between the Principal and the Secretary. At length, on 20th March, 1908, the Principal submitted his resignation as a protest against the continuous interference of the Honorary Secretary. The other European members of the staff supported him and soon Sir John Hewett, the Governor of the Province, who was also the Patron of the College, took action under Sections 139 and 141 of the Trustees Act. He called the President and the Honorary Secretary of the Board of Trustees, as also the Principal of the College, and discussed various points, over which a difference of opinion had arisen between the Secretary and the Principal. He supported Viqar-ul-Mulk in some and Archbold in others, but on the basic question he urged that there should be no interference by the Honorary Secretary in the administrative powers of the Principal, and as an example (of the supreme ignorance in the high circles, about what was really happening !) alleged that the last strike in the College was due to the interference of the former Honorary Secretary (Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk) in these matters.

Viqar-ul-Mulk, who was not convinced, returned to Aligarh and placed the entire matter before the Board of Trustees. With a few minor differences of opinion, the trustees wholeheartedly supported him and in a resolution, while reaffirming the statutory powers of the Principal, pointed out that they were being abused, and generally endorsed the stand taken by the Honorary Secretary. In the meanwhile, the Governor asked the Honorary Secretary to implement the decisions taken at Lucknow, but Viqar-ul-Mulk refused to take any action until the matter had been decided by the Board of the Trustees. He, thereupon, was invited to discuss the matter with the Governor but he politely declined to go until the views of the trustees were known.

In the meanwhile an agitation commenced in the Muslim Press and on public platform against the efforts of the Governor, and the viewpoint of Viqar-ul-Mulk was widely endorsed. His Highness the Aga Khan and Right Hon'ble Syed Amir Ali not only sent cables from England supporting the stand taken by the Honorary Secretary but wrote a joint letter to the Governor, explaining the popular point of view, and advising him not to do anything which might be misunderstood by the Muslim public. The Governor, thereafter, wrote a very mild letter to the President of the Board of Trustees declaring that nothing could be further from his intentions than to turn Aligarh College into a Government institution, and when a deputation of trustees met him later, he accepted the right of the Honorary Secretary to intervene in certain matters. After this the trustees accepted the resignation of the Principal, enumerated in writing the powers of the Honorary Secretary and forbade direct correspondence on questions of policy between the Principal and the Governor or Director of Public Instructions. The European staff, thereupon, withdrew its joint note, and one of them was appointed to succeed Archbold.

Thus ended a long-drawn controversy about the administration of the College and a new era was opened in its working. Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk's share in moulding the political policy of the Indian Muslims was equally fateful, and equally characteristic of the man. He had sharp differences of opinion with his predecessor about the rights of the European staff and certain questions of the College administration, but he was completely at one with him in political matters. He always looked back to the year of the Simla Deputation (1906) as the beginning of Muslim political rebirth in India and like Sir Syed and Mohsin-ul-Mulk, pinned his faith on the Anglo-Muslim alliance, as one means of saving Muslims from being submerged by the majority community. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru has, in his autobiography, referred sarcastically to a statement of Syed Ahmed that it was in the interest of India that the British connection with this country should continue indefinitely. It is easy to laugh at this remark—especially for those who do not know the background—but if Panditji had tried to

probe into the causes which led a sturdy and self-reliant person like Syed Ahmed to make this observation, he would have realised something of the anguish and anxiety which thoughtful Muslims were experiencing about their future in this country, and how they were clutching at every straw to save themselves. Nobody can accuse Viqar-ul-Mulk of a faint heart or any exaggerated love for the Europeans or the British, but he felt exactly like Syed Ahmed on this question and, like a blunt, straightforward man, as he was, gave expressson to his views as forcefully as Syed Ahmed. He said:

"We are numerically one-fifth of the-other community. If at any time the British Government ceases to exist in India, we shall have to live as the subjects of the Hindus, and our property, our self-resrect, and our religion will be all in danger . . . If there is any device by which we can escape this, it is by the continuance of the British Raj, and our interests can be safeguarded only if we ensure the continuance of the British Government![1]

Of course this policy could not be carried on indefinitely, but the fact that Syed Ahmed and Viqar-ul-Mulk were not giving way to imaginary fears can be seen in the fate of Muslims in East Punjab, Delhi, Ajmer, and other innumerable places in India, since the departure of the British on 15 August, 1947.

Viqar-ul-Mulk was loyally carrying on the political policy of his two predecessors, when something happened and Viqar-ul-Mulk had to radically readjust his views. In December 1911, Coronation Durbar was held at Delhi, and the 'settled fact' of partition of Bengal was unsettled. This gave a rude shock to the Muslims. They were generally happy about the partition and did not like its annulment, but more than that, in the change of policy, they saw the clay feet of the Colossus. There is no doubt that the new decison was wrong. If the original arrangement was worse, it should have never been ordered, or at least rectified before successive Governments had declared for years that there would be

1. Quoted in *Tazkirah-i-Viqar*, pp. 169-170.

no going back. The proclamation at Delhi, coming after years of prolonged and violent agitation by Bengali Hindus, convinced the people as nothing else could, that political agitation paid good dividends. It was always a beacon of encouragement to the drooping spirits of an agitator, and it also showed to the Muslims, who, it was urged, were to benefit by partition, that their interests would not be safeguarded by blind reliance on a benevolent Government. The Muslim reaction was sharp, if not violent, and Viqar-ul-Mulk was the first to give expression to their point of view. On return from the Durbar, he immediately wrote an article on "The Fate of Muslims in India," which appeared in the *Aligarh Institute Gazette* of 20 December, 1911, and in which after politely but firmly criticising the decision of the Government, he said:

"It is now manifest like the midday sun, that after seeing what has happened lately, it is futile to ask the Muslims to place their reliance on Government. Now the days for such reliances are over. What we should rely on, after the grace of God, is the strength of our right arm, for which we have, before us, the example of our worthy countrymen." [1]

He wrote other articles on the subject, and gave expression to the same feeling in a private letter:

"If on the question of Local Boards, Government considers the Muslims as worthless, as they have been considered at the time of the annulment of Partition of Bengal, then God help them in this matter also. It is the duty of the Muslims, that they should make a strong effort and show to Government what dismay has been caused by its indifference to their interests in not reassuring the Muslims, at the time of the Annulment, as to how their interests would be safeguarded under the new arrangements. This policy of the Government is like artillery passing over the dead bodies of the Muslims, without realising whether any life remained in the bodies and whether they would be hurt," [2]

1. Quoted in *Tazkirah-i-Viqar*, pp. 340-341.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 344 (See also *Makatib*).

Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk was criticised by *The Pioneer* and other Anglo-Indian papers for throwing overboard the policy of loyalty preached by Syed Ahmed Khan, but he was vigorously supported by the Muslim press—particularly *The Comrade* of Calcutta and *The Zamindar* of Lahore—and his articles became the starting point of a new era in Indo-Muslim politics.

The nationalist circles were naturally happy at this reorientation of Muslim policy, but so far as the Indian National Congress was concerned, Viqar-ul-Mulk firmly stuck to what Syed Ahmed had said. He made the position crystal clear in his article of 20 December, 1911. Referring to the decision to rescind the partition of Bengal, he said:

"By this decision Government displayed improper indifference to the Muslims, and the result is that some educated Muslims have begun to say that it is not in Muslims' interest to keep aloof from the Hindus. They suggest that we should say 'Goodbye' to the Muslim League and join the Indian National Congress—and this is what the Congress has been after for many years. We agree that the Government has given a legitimate cause for complaint to the Muslims, but we totally differ from the suggestion that we should disband our own national organisation, and join the other large group, just as a river loses its identity in a vast ocean.

"It is true that many a time disappointments point the way to suicide, and the suggestion that we should join the Congress is a result of similar disappointments—for which the present Government is responsible—but suicide is never advisable."

Some years later, when the Muslims were very sore at the Government attitude towards the proposed Muslim University at Aligarh, and suggestions for joining hands with the Hindus were revived, Viqar-ul-Mulk reiterated his advice. He urged that the Hindus and Muslims should live like best of friends, but in the matters, in which their interests differed, it was desirable that they should continue to have separate platforms.

Apart from the changes in the control and administration of the College, and the twist he gave to the Muslim political policy, Viqar-ul-Mulk's regime is known for deepening of the religious life of Aligarh College, and its popularity even with the most orthodox sections. Mohsin-ul-Mulk had tried to win the *ulama* with his suavity and tact; Viqar-ul-Mulk attracted them because he was really one of them. He had a strong religious bent of mind, and his views became firmer with the passage of time. He knew that the strength of character, which he himself, or Sir Syed or Maulvi Sami-Ullah Khan possessed, and which had enabled them to accomplish marvels, in spite of severe handicaps, was derived from religion, and he did not wish the Aligarh boys to grow up without getting a full share of religious training and enthusiasm. He did everything in his power to strengthen religious feeling in the College. He made it clear that those who did not say their prayers regularly were liable to be sent out of the College, and in one case refused to admit into the College a boy whose father insisted that attendance at prayers should not be made compulsory for him. Attendance at prayers was made compulsory for all sub-proctors, and it was made obligatory for all students to pass in the paper on "Islamic Religion." The result was that at prayer times, the College mosques were full as they had never been before, and as Viqar-ul-Mulk was encouraging religious sentiments, not only by rules and regulations but by his own inspiring example, there was a visible deepening of the religious life. It would be interesting to read on this subject the views of Maulana Shaukat Ali, a prominent old boy of the Aligarh College. He wrote in an Urdu letter, now published in the biography of Viqar-ul-Mulk:

"The revolution which can be seen in our materialistic and even 'dandyish' lives was due to the simple Islamic life of the late Nawab Sahib (Viqar-ul-Mulk). His example inspired us with respect for the grandeur of true Muslim life, and showed us that even in twentieth century, a Muslim could easily live a religious and Islamic life, and serve his community and country."

This naturally pleased the *ulama*, and the result was that not only some celebrated theologians, who were personally opposed

to English education (like Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi) visited the College, and delivered sermons, but some others, like Maulana Abdul Bari of Farangi Mahal chose the Aligarh College for education of their own children.

In many respects Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk exercised a healthy influence on the institution, of which he was the Secretary, but it cannot be said that nothing which he did was open to criticism. It has, for example, been urged that lowering of the very high educational standards, which the Aligarh College had maintained during its first thirty years, started in his time. His extreme religious orthodoxy also sometimes exceeded the true interests of the College or the community. Hakim Ahmed Shuja, who was studying at Aligarh in his days, has described in his autobiography how he and some others brought on themselves fiery wrath of Nawab Sahib by attempting to stage a play inside the College. Perhaps there will be some Muslims who may support Viqar-ul-Mulk on this point, but the efforts he made to turn the College into a stronghold of Sunni orthodoxy were certainly not in the interest of the College—or the community. Maulvi Badr-ud-Din, who has, otherwise, warmly praised Nawab Sahib, says in his Urdu account of the College :

"As the Aligarh College was giving education to boys belonging to different Islamic sects, its policy was to confine religious education to what was barely essential, and what had been agreed to, from the beginning of the College.

"Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk was the first to depart from this policy. He suggested a separate prayer-hall for Qadianis, and by appointing, under the influence of some bigoted *ulama*, separate imams (Muslim priests) for Sunni boarders in various hostels, he departed from the sound religious policy followed in the College. This led to religious disputes and controversies, and had its effect on shia students, especially as some bigoted shia *ulama* tried to exploit the situation."

Syed Ahmed had from the beginning shown a special consi-

deration to the Shias. He aimed at creating a common Muslim nationhood, by attracting on a common platform various religious sects of Islam, and he realised, that in order to achieve this, he must respect the religious susceptibilities of the smaller groups. His policy was eminently successful, and he had the full support of all enlightened Shias of his day, but developments during the regime of Viqar-ul-Mulk alienated the Shias, and had their share in the foundation of a separate Shia College at Lucknow.

Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk could not, unluckily, serve the College very long. He was more than sixty-six, when he was elected Honorary Secretary, and, five years later, he had to retire owing to ill-health. Even before this, he generally stayed at Amroha. He, however, continued to take general interest in the welfare of his people and on many important occasions, gave powerful support to the young and progressive elements in our public life. Muslim opinion was at that time greatly perturbed over the difficulties in which Turkey was involved, and departing from the policy of Sir Syed and Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who, on such occasions, had always exercised a restraining influence, Viqar-ul-Mulk fully endorsed the popular viewpoint and supported various measures taken to express them. On the question of the Muslim University also, he was with those who wanted an educational centre completely free from Government right of interference, and when, in 1913, Tyler, the District Magistrate of Cawnpore, ordered firing on the crowds, which had collected to rebuild a demolished mosque, he advised Muslims to express themselves strongly, as "otherwise, every police sub-inspector will become a Tyler for us." His interest in the religious side of the Muslim youths continued unabated. When Maulana Obaid-Ullah Sindhi opened an institute at Delhi for giving religious education to Muslim graduates, he agreed to become its patron, and apart from private efforts, issued a public appeal for contributions.

Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk passed away on 27 January, 1917, at the age of seventy-six and was buried at Amroha where he had settled, after his retirement from the College.

Even before this, owing to ill-health, old age and absence from Aligarh he had ceased to be effective in national affairs. On becoming the Secretary of the College on 15 December, 1907, he wished to resign from the secretaryship of the League, but was persuaded to continue for a few months longer, and in March 1903, Syed Hussain Bilgrami became the Honorary Secretary. The Aga Khan became permanent President of the League at the same time. In early 1910 the office of the All India Muslim League was shifted from Aligarh to Lucknow and that may be taken as the end of the predominance of Aligarh in the political affairs of the Muslim community.

Mohsin-ul-Mulk's successor at Aligarh was Viqar-ul-Mulk, but true heirs to his constructive but essentially moderate and co-operative policy were the Aga Khan and Amir Ali. The battle of the separate electorate had not been finally won with the reassuring reply of the Viceroy at Simla. Morley, the Liberal Secretary of the State, favoured a scheme by which the provision for separate electorate was completely watered down. Muslim opinion in India was hostile. In particular, the Punjab Press—the *Observer*, *Paisa Akhbar*, *Zamindar* and *Vatan*[1]—carried on a vigorous campaign against the proposed modifications. It was, however, primarily due to Amir Ali's sustained efforts that Morley's proposals did not go through. He had settled down in London and mobilised British opinion in favour of the Muslim point of view. Among other measures he took a deputation to the Secretary of State in whose presence the case for separate electorates was argued at length. *The Times*, London also advocated the Muslim cause and ultimately rules and regulations were framed which in November 1909, fulfilled to a great extent, Minto's promise to the Simla Deputation. This ensured that there was no backsliding, and the proposals advocated by Mohsin-ul-Mulk in 1906 became a part of Minto-Morley Reforms.

1. For the views expressed by *Paisa Akhbar*, *Vatan*, *Zamindar* and *The Observer* of Lahore, see Wasti, S.R., *op. cit.*, pp. 171, 172.

CHAPTER 7

THE RELIGIOUS GROUPS

THE Aligarh movement has been called "the central factor of Islamic renaissance in India".[1] It gave the Muslims a central institution which provided them with a common intellectual background, common national objectives and "an intellectual general staff for the work of Islamic integration". There were, however, other forces which also contributed to national consolidation. Leaving aside certain factors for which the British were responsible. and the indirect influence of India-wide conflict with Hindus, the institutions grew up within the country, which though originally not allied with Aligarh leadership and occasionally even in opposition, contributed to national awakening and solidarity.

DEOBAND

Most important of these was the seminary at Deoband, which according to a foreign observer is, "next to the Azhar of Cairo, the most important and respected theological academy of the Muslim world".[2] Its beginnings were humble, and the name of the original founder is all but unknown. The idea of establishing a *Madrasah* for teaching religious subjects was originally of a practising Sufi and a reputed saint, Haji Mohammad Abid of Deoband. In 1866, soon after the completion of a *chilla*, one night he saw a vision of the Prophet and in the morning collected his admirers and said that "religious knowledge is disappearing. Something should be done to keep it up. When the old *Ulama* will pass away, nobody will be left to give information about religious injunctions, as since the Madrasah at Delhi had stopped functioning, nobody is acquiring religious knowledge."[3] He

1. Pannikar, K.M., *op. cit.*, p. 283. 2. Smith, W.C., *op. cit.*, p. 320.
3. Nazir Ahmed, Haji, *Tazkira-tul-Abidin*, Delhi 1333 A.H., pp. 68-69.

suggested that subscription should be collected and a *Madrasah* established. He made his own contribution and went round Deoband to collect funds. The response was heartening and next day Haji Sahib wrote to Maulana Muhammad Qasim who was at that time in Meerut, informing him of the developments and requesting him to come and teach at Deoband. Maulana was unable to come himself, but sent a suitable teacher and promised all help. Haji Sahib became the honorary patron and manager, and a Managing Committee including the Maulana and four or five others was appointed. Soon ample funds became available and Maulana Muhammad Yaqub, a leading educationist, was appointed as the Headmaster and other administrative arrangements were made. On 14 April, 1866, the *Madrasah* started functioning in a small mosque.

Historically, Haji Muhammad Abid was the original founder of the Deoband Seminary, but the development and the success of the *Madrasah* was essentially due to Maulana Muhammad Qasim who joined it a couple of years after its establishment, and his cousin, Maulana Muhammad Yaqub. Haji Sahib did not have a large institution in view. He wanted a simple *Madrasah* on old lines. This was due partly to his asceticism and other-worldliness, and partly also to the fact that he was not acquainted with the lines on which new educational institutions were being set up. On the other hand, both Maulana Muhammad Qasim and Maulana Muhammad Yaqub had seen the working of the Delhi College where Maulana Muhammad Yaqub's father (and Maulana Muhammad Qasim's uncle) Maulana Mamlook Ali was the Head of the Arabic Department. Before joining Deoband, Maulana Muhammad Yaqub was Deputy Educational Inspector in government service and was well-acquainted with the modern educational system. The *Madrasah* at Deoband followed Madrasah-i-Rahimiya named after Shah Wali Ullah's father, in its emphasis on *Hadith*, etc., but it also incorporated many features of the new schools established by the British, *e.g.*, division of students in regular classes, attendance registers, written examinations. These features systematised the working of the *Madrasah* but its expansion and success was greatly helped by Maulana Muhammad Qasim's

vision, saintliness and influence. Maulana Muhammad Qasim died on 15 April, 1880, at the early age of forty-nine, but his work was continued by others. In 1931, 900 students were on the roll of the *Madrasah*, out of whom 368 were from U.P., 185 from Bengal, 150 from N.W.F.P. and Punjab, 26 from Assam and Burma, 17 from Chinese Turkistan and 26 from Bukhara. After the partition the *Madrasah* has had to face storms and stresses, but has continued its basic work. The number of students from areas which now constitute Pakistan must be negligible, but numerous institutions in East and West Pakistan have been started by those who had studied at Deoband and the educational traditions of the mother institution are being maintained.

Maulana Ubaid-Ullah Sindhi has said that after the unsuccessfull War of Independence, Maulana Muhammad Qasim took the Arabic Department of the old Delhi College to Deoband, while Syed Ahmed Khan took the English Department to Aligarh. Maulana Mamlook Ali under whom Maulana Muhammad Qasim and Maulana Muhammad Yaqub studied was also the teacher of Syed Ahmed Khan, and one would expect certain common features between the founders of the institutions at Aligarh and Deoband. Maulana Sindhi was speaking metaphorically, but even then his statement would be a gross simplification. Syed Ahmed Khan always had a deep regard for the founders of the Deoband seminary, and wrote a long and moving article on the death of Maulana Muhammad Qasim. At Aligarh College the department of Theology was entrusted to a near relation of Maulana Muhammad Qasim, who had studied at Deoband. Syed Ahmed's later religious views, however, could not but be an anathema to the authorities at Deoband, and at one time, he and Maulana Muhammad Qasim engaged in a controversy, practically of the same type which he had with his comrade and successor, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk.

What widened the gulf between the authorities at Deoband and Aligarh was their completely different approach to politics. Maulana Muhammad Qasim was as active during the Indian Revolt as Syed Ahmed Khan was, but they were ranged on

opposite sides. Syed Ahmed remained loyal to the British while Maulana and his companions fought them and for some time established their own government in their area. On the suppression of the revolt by the British, Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi, one of Maulana's companions and later his successor as patron of Deoband seminary, had to spend several months in jail, while their spiritual teacher Haji Imdad Ullah had to seek refuge at Mecca. When Syed Ahmed Khan denounced Indian National Congress and advised Muslims to remain aloof from it, Maulana Muhammad Qasim was not alive, but Maulana Gangohi violently differed from him and denounced his point of view. The anti-British attitude became a marked feature of Deoband, and Maulana Mahmud-ul Hassan, who was head of the institution for twenty-three years, actually left India during the first World War. He settled down at Mecca, but under the British influence was exiled to Malta and was allowed to return to his native land only in 1920. In the meanwhile the political atmosphere at Aligarh had greatly changed. The beginning of this change was visible in the attitude of Hasrat Mohani in 1906 or so, but after the annulment of the Partition of Bengal and the wars in Tripoli and the Balkans most of the prominent old boys of Aligarh like Muhammad Ali, Shaukat Ali and Zafar Ali Khan were in the vanguard of anti-British agitation. Even before he migrated to Hejaz, Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hassan had encouraged contacts between Aligarh and Deoband. In 1906 Jamiat-ul-Ansar was established at Deoband. The meeting of this organization was attended by Sahibzada Aftab Ahmed Khan of Aligarh College and it was agreed that Deoband seminary would make special arrangements for teaching religious subjects to the graduates of Aligarh College, while similar facilities in respect of English would be provided at Aligarh to those who had completed their studies at Deoband. Maulana's most fruiful effort in this direction was his inauguration of Jamia Millia at Delhi in spite of serious illness, shortly before his death in November, 1920. This institution which was originally set up for students who had discontinued studies at Aligarh during the Non-Co-operation movement incorporated many features of Deoband.

An interesting personality connected with Deoband was that of Maulana Ubaid-Ullah Sindhi. Born at Sialkot in 1872 as a Sikh, he accepted Islam at the hands of a Sindhi saint and proceeded for higher studies to Deoband. He became a favourite pupil of Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hassan and took active part in religious and political activities. He figured in what has been described in the report of the Rowlatt Committee as "The Silk-Letter Conspiracy" and left India for Afghanistan during the First World War to organize action against the British. He was Home Minister in the Provisional Government of India, formed at Kabul by Raja Mahendra Partab and Professor Barkat Ullah of Bhopal. Owing to the opposition of Amir Habibullah their efforts did not succeed and Maulana proceeded to Moscow after the Russian Revolution. After spending many years there and studying the working of the Communist Revolution he moved to Turkey and later to Mecca, and returned to India only in 1939. He was warmly welcomed by the admirers of Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hassan, but he had had an opportunity to study political movements in far-off countries and although he made Shah Wali Ullah's writings the basis of his teachings, he introduced many things which appeared strange to stay-at-home *ulama*. His views, therefore, did not command orthodox support, but he remained busy in spite of his old age in propagating his philosophy and programme. He passed away a few years after his return and is buried in a village near Bahawalpur.

Till 1947, at least, political traditions of Deoband differed from those of Aligarh. This led to controversies, but perhaps it is fair to say that establishment of a central institution catering to the requirements of religious education for the Muslim community all over the subcontinent, had, within certain limitations, a unifying effect. During the Pakistan movement the majority of the teachers and the students kept aloof from the struggle or even opposed it, but a sizeable number under the leadership of Maulana Shabbir Ahmed Usmani took active part in the struggle and helped Quaid-i-Azam.

BRELVI SECT

It is claimed on behalf of Deoband that it follows the path shown by Shah Wali Ullah, and is maintaining the traditions which originally came in vogue at Madrasah-i-Rahimiya of Delhi. Deoband has absorbed some features of modern educational organization, but largely it is true that it maintains the traditions of Shah Wali Ullah. The "chain" of the students of all important teachers of the institution reaches Shah Sahib and study of *Hadith* occupies the same place of pride at Deoband as it did at the earlier *Madrasah* at Delhi. Emphasis on the spiritual side, and an attempt to incorporate best traditions of all Sufi orders and similar catholic approach to Islamic Law as characterises Shah Wali Ullah's school of thought are visible here. It seems to be forgotten, however, that subtle but significant differences existed even between members of Shah Sahib's family and exist among many who claim to belong to his school of thought. Shah Abdul Aziz, who perhaps more than anybody else was responsible for the general acceptance of Shah Wali Ullah's views and methods was less venturesome than his father in intellectual sphere. Shah Ismail Shaheed, on the other hand, was far more radical and occasionally overlooked the basic principle of Shah Wali Ullah that a reformer, to be effective, must not cut himself away from the group which he wishes to reform. In his eagerness to emphasise the majesty of Godhead, and underline the humanity of the Prophet, Shah Ismail Shaheed occasionally used language which hurt the susceptibilities of some Muslims. Whether Shah Ismail Shaheed came under Wahabi influence while at Mecca is a moot point, but there are others who claim to follow Shah Wali Ullah's line of approach but have been positively influenced by Wahabi writings. The fact that many things are common between the reforms which Shah Wali Ullah and the Wahabi teachers urged, naturally leads to confusion. This has been made worse by publication of works which are not Shah Wali Ullah's and represent purely Wahabi point of view but have been wrongly attributed to Shah Sahib. The distinction between the two schools of thought has not always been maintained at Deoband, and even some of its best-known teachers

have urged a point of view which is more akin to that of the Wahabi teachers or Shah Ismail Shaheed than that of Shah Wali Ullah and Shah Abdul Aziz. In fact, some enthusiasts like Maulana Gangohi have contrasted Shah Ismail Shaheed and Shah Abdul Aziz and positively preferred the former. This attitude has contributed not a little to Deobandi-Brelvi controversy, which has occasionally led to serious situations in parts of the former Punjab.

The Brelvis follow Maulvi Ahmed Raza Khan who was born in 1855 in Bans Bareli of Rohilkhand Division. They stand for old traditional Islam and enthusiastically defend Sufi and religious practices to which Wahabis and some Deobandis take exception. Maulvi Ahmed Raza Khan wrote some fifty pamphlets on controversial subjects. He criticised not only Shah Ismail Shaheed and the Wahabis but even Shah Wali Ullah. Some recent Brelvi writers, however, draw a distinction between Shah Ismail Shaheed and Shah Wali Ullah. Maulvi Ahmed Raza Khan was critical of Aligarh movement but his group has not been generally anti-British on the lines of Deoband. Owing to the absence of a major *Madrasah* like that of Deoband the influence of the Brelvi group among the educated classes is not very considerable but it is popular among the masses, and in West Pakistan, especially in south-western parts of the Punjab, its hold is still strong.

SUFI ORDERS

The Brelvi school believes in the homage to saints and organizations of some Sufi orders and the Brelvi organizations like *Hizb-ul Ahnaf* occasionally merge. Generally, the Sufi orders work through personal contact between the *pir* and the disciple or in small groups, but occasionally organizations on a bigger scale have also been attempted. In particular efforts made by Khwaja Hasan Nizami who claimed relationship with a famous saint of Delhi deserve to be mentioned. In 1908 he tried his hand at a countrywide organization of the *Pirs* of all spiritual orders collected under "Halqa-i-Nizam-ul-Mashshaikh" and in July 1909 brought out a journal, *Nizam-ul-Mashshaikh* to propagate the objects of

the *Halqa*. Owing as much to individualistic approach of the *Pirs* as of their mutual differences, his attempts did not succeed. The magazine was, however, popular and useful, mainly owing to the literary skill of its promoter and Mullah Wahidi, its editor. It continued in existence for more than 30 years. *Pirs* in predominantly Muslim areas have rarely adopted or patronised such modern methods, but there are exceptions. For many years a magazine entitled *Sufi* was issued from a small town in the Punjab, and was patronised by a local saint. Sufic journals generally use simple language and have a broad, humanitarian approach.

NADVA-TUL-ULAMA OF LUCKNOW

This institution came into existence in 1894 as a result of the efforts of some religious-minded Government servants, *ulama* and Sufis, who wished to bring the *ulama* together and remove sectarian differences. Syed Ahmed Khan was somewhat sceptical of the organization's success but welcomed the move. The main work of the organization was the establishment of a *Dar-ul-Uloom* at Lucknow which has had an interesting if somewhat tragic history. For some time Shibli Nomani, for many years Syed's co-worker and later a critic, was associated with the institution. Under his influence it gained in importance but in 1914 he was forced to resign. It has a magnificent building constructed with a grant from Bahawalpur State. It never gained the popularity and importance which Deoband has in religious circles, but it has developed its own characteristics. The tradition of training in literary craftsmanship and study of modern Arabic which Shibli introduced is maintained in some degree and the 'Academy of Authors' (Dar-ul-Musannifin) at Azamgarh manned by the former students of Nadva may almost be called its by-product.

CHAPTER 8

SHIBLI

(1857—1914)

ALL the four figures, we have described in the preceding pages, were connected in one way or another, with Aligarh. One of them (Hali) spent very little time at Aligarh; another (Viqar-ul-Mulk) introduced many changes, which his two predecessors would, in all probability, have resisted firmly. Still they were all leaders of the Aligarh movement. They all believed in the value of this movement for raising their community from low political, economic and the intellectual level to which it had fallen and devoted their lives to the accomplishment of this object.

The person whose activities form the subject-matter of this chapter was also connected with Aligarh, but the results of his efforts were quite different from those of the other four. His characteristic contribution to the making of modern Muslim India is not in strengthening the Aligarh movement but in undermining it. After his education, he spent sixteen years as a colleague and co-worker of Syed Ahmed Khan; the remaining sixteen were spent in attempting to set up a rival and almost a hostile organization.

Shibli was born in the year of the Indian Revolt, at a village near Azamgarh. His father was a prominent member of the bar, a big zamindar, and an industrialist. The promising child received the best education available in the old Islamic *Madrasahs*, and was deeply influenced by Maulana Muhammad Faruq, a celebrated scholar, who was stoutly opposed to the new movement of Syed Ahmed, and had written a poem in opposition to the famous *Mussaddas* of Hali. His father, however, had by now come under the spell of Syed Ahmed, and not only did he give high modern education to his other children—one of whom was sent to England for higher studies—but it was suggested to Shibli that he, too,



(p. 132) SHAMS-UL-ULAMA ALLAMA SHIBLI NOMANI

might make up his deficiencies by acquiring a knowledge of English. This he disdainfully refused, and, with the highest attainments in Islamic sciences, had to spend some very unhappy years, trying unsuccessfully to obtain petty jobs in Government offices.

Ultimately, in 1883, he was appointed Assistant Professor of Arabic at the Aligarh College. He impressed Syed Ahmed favourably. He was keen, well-read, and ambitious, and the old man took very kindly to him. He gave him a cottage in the compound of his bungalow, placed his library, which at that time had probably the richest collection, in India, of books on Islamic subjects, at his disposal and had him for meals, almost every day. He also encouraged him to devote his energies, which had been so far wasted in sectarian controversies, to writing of poetry on national subjects and preparation of works on the history of Islam. The enthusiastic young man reacted admirably. He became a valuable asset to the Aligarh movement. He wrote books which have marked the beginning of modern historical prose in Urdu, and showed skill and feeling in writing Urdu and Persian poetry. His *Subhe-Ummeed* (The Dawn of Hope) is the best versified account of the Aligarh movement, and contains, perhaps, the warmest tribute ever paid to Syed Ahmed.

This happy state of affairs, however, did not last very long. Shibli was extremely proud and sensitive by nature, and the treatment which an Assistant Professor of Oriental languages receives at a modern college hurt him. He was also not impressed with the intellectual results of modern education. He contrasted the religious devotion to learning, which he and his companions at the old *Madrasahs* had felt, with the mercenary attitude of the college boys, and began to feel that the system of education which had produced Syed Ahmed, Hali, Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Viqar-ul-Mulk —and Shibli!—should not be underrated. He had discussions with Syed Ahmed, and urged that the ideal system of education would be "a mingling of the old and the new"—a modified form of the old system and not the new which was being followed at Aligarh.

In 1894, an organization of the *ulama* (Nadva-tul-Ulama) was started, with such a wave of enthusiasm that, to quote Suleman Nadvi, the successor of Shibli, "many believed that this would lead to the establishment of the Government of the Maulvis." This seemed to offer to the able and ambitious young man all that he wanted. Shibli felt that by capturing and developing this institution, not only could he try his experiments in education but, as his lifelong friend Abdul Halim Sharar has said, he thought that "by becoming the head of religious Ulama, he would get a status and authority, which was even beyond Syed Ahmed Khan." He, therefore, took active part in the annual gatherings of the Nadva, and soon after the death of Syed Ahmed, resigned from the Aligarh College to devote himself entirely to the new movement.

He, however, had to wait for some years, before he could join the central office of Nadva. At that time the Governor of the Province was Sir Antony Macdonell, who seemed to believe that every gathering of more than five self-respecting Muslims was a danger to the public peace, and began to show marked attention to this gathering of the *ulama.* Officers of the police shadowed the prominent leaders of the organization, with the result that most of them left British India—some on pilgrimage to Mecca, and others to seek a sanctuary in Indian States. Shibli was also a suspect, and, after consultations with Mohsin-ul-Mulk, he took asylum in Hyderabad. Here he got a remunerative post, and till Mohsin-ul-Mulk had secured the new Governor's consent to his return, and he had paid off the debts left by his father, he did not return to the north.

By now Shibli was something of a national figure, on account of his writings on historical, religious and literary subjects, and his association with Nadva enhanced the importance of the institution. He also worked hard to make it a powerful instrument of service to the community and a means of realisation of his dreams. He was in charge of the *Madrasah*, that was being maintained by Nadva, and he introduced many wholesome changes in the curriculum. He knew from bitter experience how essential a knowledge of English was for making headway in this queer world, and

he made its study compulsory in the *Madrasah.* He introduced many other changes, the need for which he had realised while discussing the question with Syed Ahmed or Thomas Arnold—his "colleague and teacher" at Aligarh—but the most marked feature of his educational activities was the special attention which he devoted to a few select students. He took great pains to pick out and train the promising youths, who could carry on his work and spread his message. In particular, he gave them a thorough training in the craft of writing, so that they could establish themselves as authors and succeed him in the intellectual leadership of Muslim India. Two of the young men, who received special attention from him were Syed Suleman Nadvi and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad—his literary and political successors.

So far Shibli had not placed all his cards on the table. His co-workers were yet in the process of training and it would have been premature to declare his hand. He described his real aims in private conversation with his friends, and in one or two written articles also dropped occasional subtle hints against the barren results of the new education, but generally he appeared as the friend of both the old and the new. He maintained friendly relations with Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk, and tried to gather support for his growing institution from all quarters. The first clear indication about what Shibli was really aiming at was given in April 1910 by his young and self-confident colleague, Abul Kalam Azad. He wrote a long article on "Nadva-tul-Ulama and the Goal of Indian Muslims" and after emphasising that the modern education had produced nothing except "job-hunters," pointed out that the only hope for the Indian Muslims lay in following the lead of the Nadva-tul-Ulama. In a well-phrased article, which appeared in the official organ of the Nadva, he said:

"All the examinations of the causes of our decline and decay lead to the conclusion that there is nobody to shepherd our confused and dispersed flock. But the group of people which the school at Nadva-tul-Ulama is producing, through its education and training, will bring together and lead this flock which has lost

its way."

This article roused suspicions amongst some supporters of Aligarh, and one of them replied with an article, "Another Attack on Aligarh." A controversy started in the Press, but shrewd and tactful Shibli, calmed the ruffled waters by saying that Nadva was not opposed to Aligarh, and had, in fact, received continuous support from Syed Ahmed Khan, Syed Mahmud, Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk.

Nearly two years later, on the annulment of the partition of Bengal, Viqar-ul-Mulk wrote his famous article, which marked the beginning of a fundamental change in the political policy so long associated with Aligarh. About this time, Turkey, which was then the principal Muslim Power in the world, was in serious difficulties, and as they were attributed to the policy of the British Foreign Minister, Sir Edward Grey, the Indian Muslims were very bitter against the British Government. In the new atmosphere, Shibli and Abul Kalam Azad felt that the time had at length come to declare their hand, and make a bid for the leadership of Muslim India. Azad started *Al-Hilal*, with which we shall deal in the next chapter, and Shibli also embarked on a new era of brilliant political writings in prose and in verse.

In some of his poems, he gave expression to the poignant grief at the troubles of Turkey and criticised the Western Powers which had started a new "Crusade" against the Muslims. In others, he used a deft pen to pour ridicule over many things, which had the support of Syed Ahmed Khan and his successors. One of them was the All-India Muslim League, which in 1913 changed its objective to "*Suitable* Self-Government for India." Of course there was nothing new about the qualification which the League leaders wished to impose on the constitution of the self-governing India. Since 1883, the Muslim leadership had urged that Muslims would get very poor representation under an unmodified system of democratic elections, and had always stood for arrangements *specially suited* to this sub-continent. But Shibli said that the qualification of "*suitability*" was simply a cloak for old pro-Govern-

ment policy, and wrote many effective poems which are remarkable for a light touch, beautiful phrasing and subtle sarcasm. The same is true of his poems about the proposed University at Aligarh. With their satirical poems and articles, Shibli and Abul Kalam Azad made it impossible for the Aligarh authorities of the day to establish the university on the lines acceptable to Government, and its inauguration had to be postponed for many years.

In all these poems, there were veiled and occasionally unveiled attacks on the ideals and policy associated with Aligarh. Syed Ahmed Khan and his successors had urged that it was in Muslim interests to be loyal to the Government in power. Shibli called this a slavish mentality and referred to Aligarh College as "An Institution for Training in Slavery." He did not realise, as Viqar-ul-Mulk stated, that loyalty to Government was not an "end" but a "means"—to the welfare of the Muslims—and when Muslim interests required a change in the policy, Aligarh leaders were the first to advocate it and, as the later events proved, men educated at Aligarh—Muhammad Ali, Shaukat Ali, and Zafar Ali Khan—were in the vanguard of an anti-British movement.

In his criticism of Aligarh, Shibli was occasionally less than fair, but in those days of emotional frenzy this did not lessen the appeal of his poems and articles. They were beautiful, masterly utterances and went home. It appeared likely that Shibli's dream of his Nadva replacing Aligarh in the leadership of Muslim India was about to be fulfilled, but just when the cup of Shibli's desires was brimful, it was snatched from his hands. Shibli, by his intellectual powers, ability to plan ahead, and self-sacrifices was well-qualified for the leadership of Indian Muslims, but his personal character was not of the same high quality as his intellect or his literary genius. He had come forward as the champion of the religious group, but the religious saw little of the true religion in him. His religious views were heterodox and there were stories about his personal life, which may not be embarrassing for a poet or an artist, but which did not enhance his reputation as a leader of a religious movement. He was also haughty and touchy and soon his colleagues of Nadva combined to get rid of

him. He himself provided the opportunity. Although he professed to be a great advocate of liberty and intellectual independence, in 1913, he took disciplinary action against a colleague of his for writing an article on 'Jehad.' This led to a strong agitation against him, and Shibli, who possibly thought that he would be considered indispensable by Nadva, tendered his resignation. This was readily accepted, and Shibli's opponents successfully resisted all attempts he made to stage a come-back.

Shibli died within a year of this, but before he died, this gifted, industrious, restless being had established, at Azamgarh, an Academy of Authors, which carries on his message to this day. His political mission was carried on—with greater extremism than Shibli was capable of—by Abul Kalam Azad, who later organized Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind to carry out the political activities which Shibli wanted Nadva to undertake.

We shall deal with the career of Abul Kalam Azad in the next chapter, but it may be useful to sum up Shibli's specific contributions to the political history of Muslim India. Shibli was the first Indian Muslim who discovered the value of making religion the basis of political appeal. He is the original author of the war-cry, which became so prominent in subsequent Indo-Muslim politics—"Islam in Danger." Syed Ahmed Khan was deeply interested in religion, and he was also the political leader of his people, but he kept religion and politics apart. Referring to his and similar efforts, Shibli said in an Urdu speech, delivered at an annual gathering of Nadva:

"For the last thirty years, efforts have been made to uplift the Muslims in the name of nationhood, but the failure of these efforts is only too obvious. The followers of the Prophet do not respond to the call of nationhood. Appeal to them in the name of religion, and you and will see what a splendid response you get!"[1]

1. Quoted in Syed Suleman's biography of Shibli entitled *Hayat-i-Shibli*, p. 502.

Shibli had so much faith in the value of religion as an aid to the worldly ends, that he wanted all his associates and co-workers to live in a religious garb—at least for the sake of "the other gains!" In a letter dated 12 June, 1910, he wrote to Abul Kalam Azad:

"You should live more and more in the garb of religious teachers (Maulviyat). You can put this to many a good use!" [1]

More or less as a corollary of this theory, and as a part of Shibli's general scheme was his attempt to organise the religious group so that they—with Shibli at the head—could secure the leadership of the Muslim people.

His first address to the Nadva-tul-Ulama was delivered in 1894, *i.e.*, four years before he left Aligarh College. He exhorted the *ulama* to organize themselves under the aegis of Nadva, and said:

"Gentlemen! In the days of the Muslim rule the worldly as well as the religious affairs of the Muslims were in the hands of the ulama. In addition to indicating regulations regarding prayer, fasting, etc., the ulama decided judicial cases. They punished criminals and passed orders, awarding capital punishment or ransom. In short, the reins of the affairs of the community relating both to this and the next world were in the hands of the ulama. Now that things have changed, and worldly affairs have come under the authority of (the British) Government, we have to see what relationship the ulama have with the community, *viz.*, what powers have been taken over by the Government, and what have been left over and are within the domain of the ulama, in which Government itself does not wish to interfere.

"Owing to the present condition of the ulama, their seclusion or rather indifference, it is generally felt that the link which they retain with the community is merely religious, *i.e.*, they

1. *Makatib-i-Shibli* (second ed.), Vol. I, p. 271.

indicate the regulations concerning prayer, fasting, etc. Other affairs are believed to be outside their purview, in which they have no right of interference. I believe this to be wrong and totally wrong." [1]

He explained at length that the moral life of the Muslims, their education and scholarship, their customs and conventions and their intellectual life were even now under the influence of the *ulama*, and after giving some details, said, "From this it would be seen that a very large part of the national life is in *ulama's* right of ownership (*haqq-i-malkiyat*) and they alone have or can have absolute sway (*mutliq-ul-inan*) over it." [2]

He exhorted the religious leaders to organise themselves under the aegis of Nadva, and painted an impressive picture of the day when all this would be achieved:

"Nadva would then be so powerful that the entire Muslim community will be governed by its injunctions. People will have to bow to the religious verdicts of Nadva, and will be powerless to defy its decisions." [3]

Nadva did not fulfil Shibli's dreams of acquirimg "absolute sway" over the Muslim community. In fact, things became so difficult for him that he had to leave the institution. But this determined dreamer did not give in. He now turned to his real source of strength—the power of the pen—to gain his object. He was the leading man of letters in Muslim India, and he decided to set up an Academy of Authors (Dar-ul-Musannifin) so that at least his ideas may dominate the people. After describing his plans, he wrote in a letter of November, 1913:

"In India there are Anjumans (Associations) for everything, but an Anjuman of Authors is still lacking and this is the most important task. *An able author can rule over the minds of thou-*

1. *Khutbat-i-Shibli*, p. 29. 2. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

sands of people." (Translated from Urdu.) Italics ours.

Shibli did not live very long after that, but before he died he had laid a firm basis for an Academy of Authors at his native place, Azamgarh. He endowed his family bungalow and garden to house the Academy, donated his library, and put forward an elaborate scheme for a detailed biography of the Prophet, which brought ample financial assistance from Begum of Bhopal to enable the organization to function. He died before Dar-ul-Musannifin went into production, but Syed Suleman Nadvi, his loyal and competent successor (and biographer), carried out the project most efficiently. The Dar-ul-Musannifin became the leading literary centre of Muslim India, and the *Muarif*, its periodical, became the most influential scholarly journal of the community. Shibli's dream of intellectual sway over his people was, after all, realized. This was facilitated by the fact that although Aligarh produced great political leaders and a large number of able administrators, it totally failed to maintain Syed Ahmed's traditions of intellectual leadership. The result was that not only owing to two divergent schools of thought attempting to lead Muslims in different directions, ground was prepared for what Ian Stephens calls "a sort of schizophrenia" in the mind of Muslim India (and now of Pakistan) but that owing to the intellectual dominance of the group led by Shibli, for a long time the noblest sons of Aligarh, like Maulanas Muhammad Ali, Shaukat Ali and Zafar Ali Khan, echoed his thought and followed his policies rather than those of Syed Ahmed Khan.

While Suleman Nadvi was Shibli's successor in the field of scholarship and literary activity, Abul Kalam Azad maintained and even extended his traditions in the political field. In course of time the ideas propagated by the three found other votaries and, in fact, dominated Muslim India. Shibli, Suleman and Abul Kalam Azad,—and later, Maudoodi—form an unbroken chain.

CHAPTER 9

ABUL KALAM AZAD

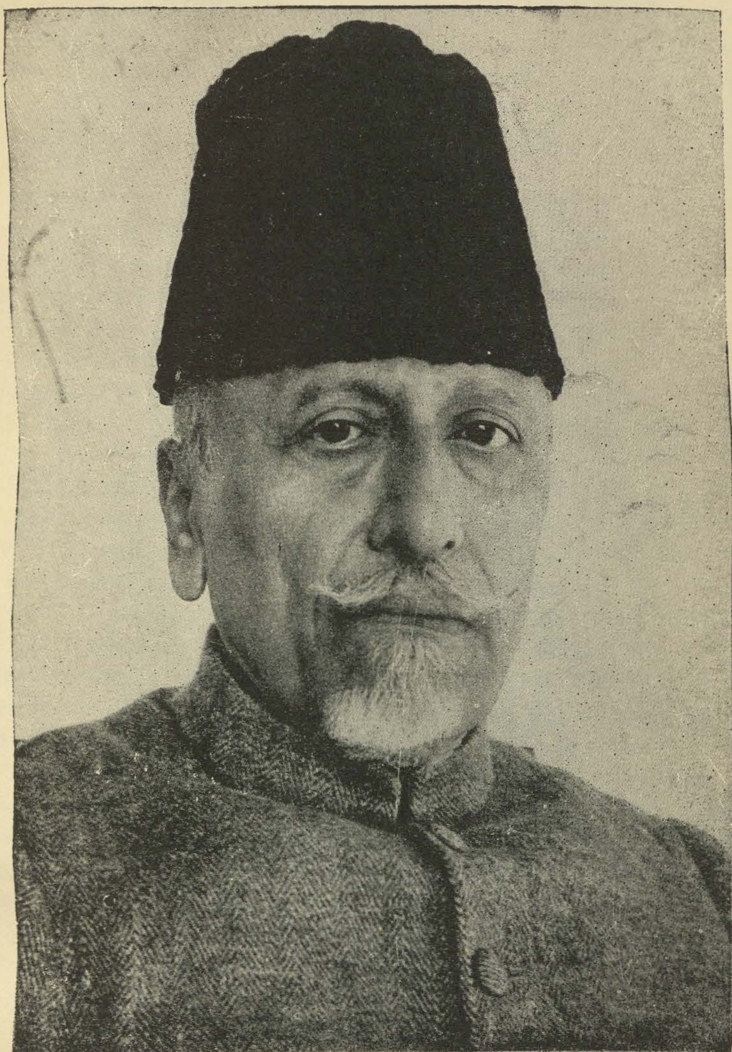
(1888–1958)

SHIBLI had prepared his plans thoroughly and carefully but the hesitancy of a dual personality and certain weaknesses of character hampered his work. These deficiencies were supplied by Abul Kalam Azad. He brought to the execution of these schemes, a rhetorical skill, a tenacity of purpose, and an audacity all his own, but, in essence, the path he followed had been chalked out by his predecessor. It is true that the young man, in his supreme self-confidence, went beyond what Shibli had planned—and to that extent cut himself adrift from his people—but in general, the direction and the course of his journey had been already indicated.

Abul Kalam's early days are wrapped up in mystery. His admirers have tried so hard to turn him into a legend that possibly there has been some embellishing of the records. It is not certain, for example, what his real name is. He has been variously called as Ahmed and Mohy-ud-din but in his earliest letter on record, he has signed himself "Ghulam Mohy-ud-din."[1] The same mystery surrounds his father. It has been stated that he left India after the Revolt of 1857, that Nawab of Rampur was his spiritual disciple, that he was called to Constantinople by Sultan Abdul Hamid. Nobody has elaborated or even investigated these details, and one is at a handicap in correctly assessing the background of so important and intriguing a personality.

From the stray bits of information which have been vouchsafed to the general public, it is, however, possible to infer that Maulana's father, who was a theologian as well as a *Pir*, left

1. See *Muraqqa-ul-Adab*, edited by Safdar, p. 56.



(p. 142) MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

Bombay towards the end of the last century and settled in Mecca, where Maulana was born in 1888. His father returned to India ten years later, and took up residence at Calcutta, as he had a number of disciples in East Bengal. Azad was brought up in a religious atmosphere, and was educated on old, Islamic lines.

Azad's father was one of the influential *Pirs*, who correspond in spiritual realm to the landed aristocracy in mundane matters, and if he had wanted he could have lived comfortably on the offerings and homage of his father's disciples. The self-reliant child, however, spurned this course and at an early age resolved to make a name by his pen. He was, by all accounts, a precocious child. He wanted to write a life of Ghazali when he was only twelve. Two years later, he was contributing learned articles to *Makhzan*, the best known literary magazine of the day. One of them was (characteristically) about the power and influence of the press and another was an instalment from his proposed history of Persian poetry. He had also started attending national gatherings and the elder leaders were amazed at seeing this young prodigy. From his serious literary undertakings, they had thought that he must be a grown-up person, but now they were confronted with a boy of sixteen. Hali, it is said, when first introduced to Abul Kalam, took him to be the son of the learned writer of that name, whose articles he had seen and admired!

At one of these gatherings, Azad came across Shibli, and a meeting took place, which meant so much to both of them. Azad belonged to a religious family, but was more interested in politics, literature, journalism and similar subjects. Shibli did not belong to a family of the religious *ulama*, but was concentrating his energies on their organization on modern lines. There was much in common between the two and there is no doubt that the precocious young man fascinated Shibli. The letters which he later wrote to Abul Kalam Azad were withheld—we think, wisely—at the time of the first publication of *Makatib-i-Shibli*, but they have now been included in the second edition, and anybody who reads them can see how fond Shibli was of Abul Kalam Azad. He took him to Lucknow, where he stayed with him at Nadva for

some time, edited *An-Nadva*, the official organ of the institution, and joined Shibli in intimate discussions on intellectual, political and religious subjects. Syed Suleman, who was at Nadva about the same time, says that it was Shibli who made a "Maulana" of Abul Kalam Azad, brought him prominently before the public by offering him editorship of *An-Nadva*, and influenced his political views in pan-Islamic and pro-Congress directions.

Abul Kalam Azad was, by now, well-known in national circles, and wanted to start a newspaper of his own, to wield the influence which he had stated in an article he published at the age of 14, belonged to the Press in the West. For this, however, he had to wait for some time, and he used this interval to equip himself more fully for his self-imposed mission. In 1906, he took up the editorship of *Vakil* of Amritsar, a bi-weekly, which wielded considerable influence during those days. In 1909, his father died after having appointed Abul Kalam Azad as his successor. He now left Amritsar, and carried on, for some days, the work of his father, first in Bombay and later at Calcutta. At the same time, he continued his literary activities and preparations for the publication of his long-contemplated newspaper.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had to wait for some years for the publication of his own newspaper, but the delay, instead of being a hindrance, helped him. The publication of *Al-Hilal*—the first issue came out on 13 July, 1912—was singularly well-timed. Muslim India was in a ferment and in a mood to be easily swayed by an emotional appeal. Viqar-ul-Mulk's speeches and writings —after the Delhi Durbar—had marked the end of the old policy of political quietism and reliance on Government. His lead had been energetically followed by two young Aligarians—Zafar Ali Khan in the Punjab and Maulana Muhammad Ali at Calcutta. The ground had been fully prepared by these three, and the growing difficulties of Turkey had perturbed the people even more than the annulment of the Partition of Bengal.

Al-Hilal was not only fortunate in the time of its appearance, but it had all the auxiliary attractions, which enhance the appeal

of a newspaper. Muhammad Ali's *Comrade*, started some 18 months earlier, had set a high standard in Muslim journalism, and Abul Kalam Azad was determined to excel that. He succeeded. His 'weekly' was printed on thin art paper, in the best Beyrut type, and was copiously illustrated. The Muslim reading public had not seen anything like this before, and was naturally thrilled.

Evea more effective than the surrounding atmosphere, and the get-up of the paper, was the rhetorical skill and the ability of the editor. The style of *Al-Hilal* has been recently criticised for its verbosity and obscurities and its appeal to the heart rather than to the head. The criticism is not unjust, and less gifted writers have shown how easy it is to imitate some of its undesirable features. These objections, however, did not damp the enthusiasm of the early readers of *Al-Hilal.* They were used to the humdrum, matter-of-fact prose of the other Urdu papers and Abul Kalam's style appeared like the language of a high-souled prophet. It completely swept them off their feet.

Abul Kalam also used his powers shrewdly. Viqar-ul-Mulk had abandoned the old Aligarh policy of reliance on Government, but he still urged a separate platform for the Muslims, and was opposed to their joining the Congress. Abul Kalam differed from him but did not seriously challenge him on this point. He chose a more vulnerable spot in the armour of the opponent—indifference to the welfare of the Turks and other Muslims outside India—and concentrated on that. His own views on this subject are summed up in a letter which he wrote to a friend, shortly after he started *Al-Hilal*:

" Aligarh movement has paralysed the Muslims. The real aim is the promotion of Pan-Islam, which is the true foundation and link for the progress and reform of Islam, and, for this, there will never be a better opportunity than we have now. Today no local or national movement can benefit the Muslims, even if it be the tall talk of the (Aligarh) University. So long as the whole world of Islam does not come together in an international and universal alliance, how can small tracts help the forty crores

10

of Muslims ?"[1]

Bulk of his paper was devoted to articles and photographs about Turkey. Abul Kalam Azad concentrated on this question. He had seen, in the Punjab, how enthusiasm for Turkey had been created by the *Watan*, the *Vakil* and the *Zamindar*, and knew that people would disown Aligarh more easily on this point. Of course there had been a great outburst of pro-Turkish feelings, even at Aligarh. But he was not satisfied. He even used the opportunity to remind people (in the fourth issue of *Al-Hilal*) of what Syed Ahmed had said against pro-Turkish demonstrations, and bitterly scolded the Aligarh leaders on their indifference to Muslims. Later he delivered as peech at Calcutta, which was printed in the form of leaflets and widely circulated. In this he referred, without naming, but on lines which made his meaning obvious, to "those heretics and hypocrites who, during the last forty years, had co-operated with the Satans of Europe to weaken the influence of Islamic Caliphate and Pan-Islam."

Today, after Indian Muslims have seen the poor outcome of their pro-Turkish efforts, they are beginning to think that there was something to be said for Syed Ahmed's policy, but in those days of emotional frenzy, nobody noticed this. Abul Kalam's emphasis on Pan-Islam, not only embittered the Muslim opinion against the Christian—including the British—Governments but also undermined the power and influence of the old Aligarh leaders.

Soon Abul Kalam had another occasion to cross swords with his opponents. A couple of years before, it had been decided to raise the Aligarh College to a University, and H. H. The Aga Khan, who took the lead in the matter, collected large sums needed for the purpose. Differences, however, arose between the promoters and the Government over the name of the University, Government power of veto, and affiliation of Islamia colleges in the country to the proposed University. None of the

1. Quoted in Khwaja Hasan Nizami's *Ataliq-i-Khutut Navisi* (4th Edn.) p. 34.

promoters liked Government attitude on these points, but, as Shibli wrote in a letter to Abul Kalam, "something was better than nothing," and they began to explore lines on which a settlement could be achieved. Abul Kalam Azad, however, grasped that the promoters, by giving up their original stand, were offering an excellent target for attack, and in a series of articles, which rank as masterpieces, not of journalism but of satirical literature, he poured out refined scorn on this change of front. Maulana Muhammad Ali was picked out for some special attention. Soon the whole country joined the young editor of *Al-Hilal.* Viqar-ul-Mulk said that he had been misinformed, and Shibli also entered the lists on the side of his gifted junior, with his effective satirical poems. Maulana Muhammad Ali — and a few others—tried to arrest the drift of opinion, but failed, and the ideas of a compromise with Government had to be shelved,

But Maulana Abul Kalam Azad did not achieve triumph simply by a skilful handling of the current political issues. He had a message—and on a point dear to every Muslim heart. This was the message of religious revivalism, and extension of religion to every phase of a Muslim's life. *Al-Hilal*, it has been said, had 'religion' in one hand and 'politics' in the other, and in both, it professed to follow the Qur'an. " Back to Qur'an" was its battle-cry, When somebody asked Abul Kalam Azad whether he followed the extremist or the moderate school of Indian politics, he ridiculed the very idea of a Muslim following others in any matter. They were the chosen people of God and had their path clearly pointed out to them. So far as he was concerned, he said, he followed nothing but the Qur'an and urged all his co-religionists to do the same. (Vide *Al-Hilal*, 8-9-12, etc.)

Today many have begun to see the weakness of this argument. Quotations from the Qur'an have been cited to support such completely contradictory standpoints that people are beginning to think that although the Holy Book is most definite and clear on fundamentals of spiritual and moral regeneration of man, to cite it on problems on which it never professed to give guidance,

is to provide a dangerous weapon to clever interpreters. To *Al-Hilal*, the message of the Qur'an was one of complete independence of thought and action, but when in 1919 Martial Law was declared in some cities of the Panjab, big posters were put up at Lahore and other places, with quotations from the Qur'an enjoining on Muslims the observance of law and order. The way extracts from the Qur'an about dealing with the non-Muslims were splashed during the elections held in 1946 to successfully oppose the standpoint of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is only recent history. All this has shown to the honest and the thoughtful, that the policy of appeal to the Qur'an in all matters is not so simple of application as Abul Kalam Azad made it out to be. Similarly, as a critic has observed, the revivalism of *Al-Hilal* has done no lasting service to the cause of true religion. Azad was able to kindle religious emotion, and make Muslims believe that they were the chosen people on the earth, but such supreme self-regard is hardly conducive to any spiritual reform or self-purification. This, however, is a later judgment. Thirty-seven years ago, the effect of the religious appeal was tremendous. Apart from the support which it gave to the views of Abul Kalam Azad, it had a general healthy effect too. People realised that the Qur'an contained guidance not only on " ablutions and prayers," but on the basic requirements and practical life of mankind, and thus a new significance and importance came to be attached to the study of the Holy Book.

A by-product of this policy was that *ulama* began to take more active interest in the political affairs of the community, Of course, in the past also, they had not been totally indifferent to the fortunes of their people, but formerly they intervened only at the time of a real crisis (like the denial of religious liberties to the Muslims, under the Sikh rule) when such intervention became a religious duty. Now Abul Kalam had held out that "politics" and "religion" were twins and naturally this led to the religious leaders taking greater interest in politics. The beneficial effect of this development—both on religion and politics—was challenged even in the conlumns of *Al-Hilal.* It was urged by an influential correspondent that the devotion of religious leaders to

politics would adversely affect their religious activities,[1] and experience has shown that in politics *ulama* tend to become mere camp-followers of one clever politician or another. The participation of *ulama* in political matters, however, made politics a much more living thing for the general masses, and Azad received powerful support from a very influential section of the community.

Abul Kalam's writings had a quickening effect on the religious life of the Indian Muslims. Of course the vast majority of them had never been indifferent to religion, and years before the publication of *Al-Hilal*, Viqar-ul-Mulk had started, at Aligarh, an era of religious orthodoxy and strictness which could not but affect the attitude of the younger generation. But Abul Kalam approached the problem with a new vigour, and brought to his policy of making religion the basis of all things, the aid of a powerful pen. This led to a religious revival, and in the new atmosphere of faith and enthusiasm, the apologetic attitude of Syed Ahmed Khan towards some aspects of Islam, and his endeavours to conform Islam to modern sciences, lost their appeal.

In the realm of domestic politics Abul Kalam Azad did not directly challenge the proposal of Viqar-ul-Mulk that Muslims should continue to have a separate platform. He very rarely wrote on this subject and one would search in vain the bulky files of *Al-Hilal* and *Al-Bilagh* to find a single article on "Hindu-Muslim Relations" or such subjects as the "Future of Muslims in India." The editor of *Al-Hilal* would appear never to have been really interested in Muslim India, but one of the articles on a contemporary controversy, incidentally, contains a few vigorous remarks on the Hindu-Muslim question, which assume importance in view of the later history of the Maulana. In an article dealing with the conversion of Ismaili Hindus, he writes:

"There is no need to fear the Hindus. You should only fear God. You are soldiers of God, but you have discarded the

1. *Al-Hilal* for 8 October, 1918, p. 280.

uniform bestowed by God on you. Wear it and the whole world will be afraid of you. If you wish to stay in India, and remain alive, you should embrace your neighbours. You have seen the results of staying away from them ; now you should join hands with them. If there is obstruction on their side, do not care. You have to see what your position is in the nations of the world. You are the vicegerents of God on earth. So, like God, you should see all others from above. Even if other nations do not treat you nicely, you should treat them well. The elders forgive the mistakes of their juniors. They do not resent, and scream, even if they are tormented by them."[1]

The period of Abul Kalam Azad's journalistic activities came to an end after some three and a half years. In 1914, the first Great War started, and on account of certain pro-German articles and photographs, the security of *Al-Hilal* Press was forfeited, and it was asked to deposit another sum of ten thousand rupees. On this *Al-Hilal* ceased publication, but soon Maulana started another weekly—*Al-Bilagh*. This also came to an end in March 1916, when Maulana was externed from Bengal. He settled near Ranchi, where he was later interned under the Defence of India Ordinance, till his release under the Royal Amnesty of 1920. Maulana employed his forced idleness at Ranchi in literary and religious pursuits, but except for the magnificent *Tazkirah*—which is also a fragment—none of the literary efforts of this period has seen the light of the day.

When Maulana was released, the whole country was in a ferment, as it had never been before, since the days of the Great Revolt. Muslims were perturbed over "the Khilafat wrongs" and the Hindus were unhappy over Rowlatt Act and "the Punjab excesses." Both joined hands in a powerful agitation. This was the very fulfilment of Abul Kalam's dreams and on his release he threw himself whole-heartedly into the new movement. He joined the Khilafat Committee, the Congress, and had a hand in organizing the Jamiat-ul-Ulama. This happy state of affairs was,

1, *Al-Hilal* for 1 September, 1911. pp. 2-3.

however, not to last very long. Soon there was a split in the Congress on the question of Council-entry, and Maulana was asked to preside over the special session of the All-India National Congress, held to consider the question in 1923. The difficulty was solved by the Swarajists being allowed a certain freedom of action, but general conditions in the country continued to deteriorate. Shuddhi and Sangthan movements had been started a year earlier, and were followed by serious Hindu-Muslim riots at Multan and other places. Affairs outside the country were not more propitious. Mustafa Kamal Pasha had frustrated the anti-Turkish designs of Lloyd George and others, but he also abolished the Caliphate, to which Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and (as a result of his advocacy) Indian Muslims had attached so much religious significance. The decision of the Angora Republic naturally meant a death-blow to the Khilafat Movement and before long the Khilafat leaders had to choose other platforms. Maulana Muhammad Ali stuck to the effete Khilafat Committee for some time and later drifted back to the Muslim camp, which was now looking more and more towards internal affairs, and gradually realising the soundness of Syed Ahmed's policy. This, however, Abul Kalam Azad with his lifelong opposition to the Aligarh ideals, could not do, and chose the All-India National Congress. These were bitter days for the leaders, who had preached allegiance to the Turkish Caliph since 1912, and, in despair, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad turned more and more to literature and scholarly pursuits. In 1927, he re-started *Al-Hilal* but it was a flop, and had to cease publication within six months. He now devoted more of his time to the commentary and translation of the Holy Qur'an. Two volumes of this work have so far been published, and although they do not satisfy the expectations, which one could reasonably have from the maturer years of the editor of *Al-Hilal*, yet, as some one has said, anything from the pen of Abul Kalam Azad is a treat and *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* is no exception. It is written in a much simpler language than was employed in the pages of *Al-Hilal*—probably reflecting the change from a Pan-Islamic to a nationalist standpoint—and though normally Abul Kalam's style is too diffuse to make him a good translator, he has evaded this problem by offering not a simple

rendering of the Holy Book but an "Explanatory Translation." The long introduction also marks a change from the standpoint of *Al-Hilal*, as instead of showing Muslims "the chosen" people of the world, he holds out Islam to be a universal religion—,which is probably the true Quranic conception of Islam.

Abul Kalam Azad was living in this literary retirement, when something happened which marked the beginning of another era of energetic political activity. In 1937, Dr. Ansari died. He had been, since the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan, Mahatma Gandhi's adviser on the Muslim question, and now it became necessary to find another Muslim, who should also be a devcted nationalist, for filling his place. No person of all-India repute, except Abul Kalam Azad was available, and so he stepped into Ansari's shoes. As, on account of the pending constitutional changes, the question of the Muslim rights assumed increasing importance, and as the Muslim League effected a triumphant return in the Indian politics, Maulana Abul Kalam came to occupy a key-position in the affairs af the country. He was elected President of the Indian National Congress in 1938, and as, owing to the World War II, very few sessions of the Congress were held—and prominent Congress leaders were in custody for three years—he continued to occupy this office for almost eight crucial years. In his presidential address delivered in 1940 at the Ramgarh session of the All-India National Congress, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad dealt at length with the question of "The Muslims of India and the Future of the Country," and as the views expressed therein represent not only the viewpoint of the Maulana, but the political creed of Dr. Zakir Hussain and the Jamia group, the Jamiat-ul-Ulama leaders, the Momins, and the nationalist leaders like Syed Mahmud, Syed Abdullah Brelvi, and many others, it may not be out of place to give a lengthy extract. He said:

" Do we, Indian Musalmans, view the free India of the future with suspicion and distrust or with courage and confidence? If we view it with fear and suspicion, then undoubtedly we have to follow a different path. No present declaration, no promise for the future, no constitutional safeguards, can be a remedy for

our doubts and fears. We are then, forced to tolerate the existence of a third power. This third power is already entrenched here and has no intention of withdrawing and if we follow this path of fear, we must needs look forward to its continuance. But if we are convinced that for us fear and doubt have no place, and that we must view the future with courage and confidence in ourselves, then our course of action becomes absolutely clear. We find ourselves in a new world, which is free from the dark shadows of doubt, vacillation, inaction and apathy, and where the light of faith and determination, action and enthusiasm, never fails. The confusions of the times, the ups and downs that come our way, the difficulties that beset our thorny path, cannot change the direction of our steps. It becomes our bounden duty, then, to march with assured steps to India's national goal."

It is easy to pick holes in this line of argument. It is also possible, now, after the advent of Indian Independence, to point to numberless happenings and developments, which show the hope expressed above to have been illusory. The urge to quote irrefutable facts and figures is natural, but perhaps it may be best to hold one's judgment. Since 15 August, 1947, Indian Muslims have seen many very dark days and their position has steadily deteriorated, but will this state of affairs continue indefinitely ? Will the evil forces, which cost Mahatma Gandhi his life, finally overwhelm the forces of good, fairplay, statesmanship, and justice ? Time alone can give a final answer, but not only the welfare of four crores of Indian Muslims but of India demands that it should be a firm negative.

During his long term of office as President of the Indian National Congress, Maulana, along with other important Congress leaders, was interned for three years, in Ahmednagar Fort. As usual, he spent this enforced leisure in literary pursuits. Out of what he wrote during this period, *Ghubar-e-Khatir* has seen the light of the day. It purports to be a collection of letters, addressed (but not delivered) to a friend, but in reality it is a *tour de force* of a literary craftsman. In this book Maulana has picked up seem-

ingly insignificant subjects as "pegs" for his thoughts but he brings such a mature mind to their consideration, and has treated them with such artistic skill that the book has all the features of a literary masterpiece. The book is also interesting for the insight it gives into Maulana's mind and the changes it has undergone since the days of *Al-Hilal* and *Tazkirah.* In his earlier writings Maulana led the reaction against the Aligarh movement. He was the champion of the old against the new, of religious revivalism against rationalism of Syed Ahmed, of Pan-Islam against regional efforts, of the theory of Muslims being the chosen people of God against the view that the remorseless laws of nature are same for all and that the Muslims will have to borrow from others—particularly the West—if they want to hold their own. Maulana may or may not realise this, but a careful study of *Ghubar-e-Khatir*, and his other contemporary writings shows that Maulana's outlook had greatly changed. It is not easy to recognise the youthful, enthusiastic, over-confident, Pan-Islamist editor of *Al-Hilal*, in the mature, cosmopolitan, savant who wrote these letters in Ahmednagar Fort. In matters, other than religious, he had already abandoned the creed of revivalism. In his presidential address at Ramgarh Congress, he had stated:

"I am one of those who believe that revivalism may be a necessity in a religion but in social matters it is a denial of progress."

But *Ghubar-e-Khatir* shows that even with regard to religion, he has moved away from his original stand. One of the fundamental points of difference between Syed Ahmed Khan and the orthodox Muslims was that he regarded prayer (دعا) merely as a form of devotion, and did not believe in its power "to move mountains" or alter the course of things. In the days of *Al-Hilal*, Abul Kalam also championed the orthodox point of view. But *Ghubar-e-Khatir* shows that his views have undergone a reorientation, and come very close to Syed Ahmed's stand. In its pages Maulana ridicules those *ulama* of Al-Azhar, who in 1791 hoped to stop Napoleon's advance in Egypt by chanting *Sahih Bukhari*, and the Emir of Bokhara, who some years later wished to defeat the Russians by having *Khatm-e-Khwajgan* in mosques and

madrasahs.[1] Maulana makes it clear that this was not the attitude of Muslims in the heyday of their glory and contrasts the blind fanaticism of the Christian crusaders with the realism and resources of Muslims facing them :

"Europe was the champion of religious fanaticism. Muslims stood for science and reason. Europe wished to fight with the weapons of steel and fire." [2]

During the struggle for Pakistan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was ranged against the Muslim League leadership, and became unpopular with the large majority of Muslims. After 1947, he became the undisputed leader of the Indian Muslims. Prime Minister Nehru greatly respected him, and both worked together to give some reality to India's claim of secularism, against Sardar Patel's hidden and open onslaughts. When Maulana passed away on 22 February, 1958, according to the newspaper reports, Nehru wept in public. Towards the end, his attitude towards Syed Ahmed Khan seems to have changed, and he paid him a high tribute, while addressing the students of the Muslim University, Aligarh. Even on the question of safeguards for Muslims his opinion seems to have undergone a certain change. K. L. Panjabi, the biographer of Patel writes, "When the Constitution was on the anvil, even Maulana Azad was at first in favour of reservation of seats for Muslims. But Sardar had skilfully managed the Muslim members of the Minority Committee and they had agreed to forego the reservation of seats."[3] A paragraph appearing in the *Pioneer* gives a slightly different version of the developments, and though satirical of Maulana's efforts, and obviously biased, underlines the change in his point of view. When the Separate Electorates were abolished by the Indian Constituent Assembly, Maulana was absent, as he had left for Kashmir. Even in the Minority Committee which recommended this course, he remained neutral (along with Maulana Hifzur Rahman). *Pioneer* of Lucknow, however, hinted that it was

1. *Ghubar-e-Khatir*, p 167.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 164.
3. Panjabi, K. L., *The Indomitable Sardar*, p. 214.

due to Maulana's lobbying that Muslim members of Madras opposed the abolition of communal representation and separate electorates:

"Prior to his departure for Kashmir, Maulana Sahib, for the first time, was seen taking active interest in Parliamentary affairs. He often visited the lobbies and was seen closeted with Muslim members from Madras. It may, however, be a pure accident that the Madras Muslim members became the stoutest opponents of the Minority Committee's report. Tajammul Hussain obliquely hinted that someone high up had been instigating the Muslims not to trust Hindus, who could never change their narrow-minded communalism. The advice given to the Muslims was to stick to reservation." [1]

Towards Pakistan and her leaders, Maulana's attitude was dignified and statesmanlike. Abdul Majid Daryabadi, by no means a friend or admirer of Abul Kalam Azad, recalls a private gathering of 1948, when among others a son of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was present. "Towards his opponents, particularly the Muslim League, there was not a trace of complaint or criticism in what Maulana said. References to all were equally well-mannered. With regard even to Pakistan, instead of complaints or sneers, there was goodwill, and some words like, "Now that it has come into existence, everybody's interest lies in its being strong and stable." [2] Shortly after Maulana's death, an English book, *India Wins Freedom* appeared, based on his Urdu account as translated and edited by Humayun Kabir. It suffers from the disadvantages inseparable from imperfect translation of the work of a great stylist, which he did not revise or check up but the book gives useful information regarding the political history of the sub-continent at a crucial period.

In the fifty years of his public career, Abul Kalam Azad saw much, suffered much, and changed a great deal. The author of

1. *Pioneer*, Lucknow, dated 1-6-1949.
2. Vide *Abul Kalam Azad*, edited by Anwar Arif, p. 40.

Ghubar-e-Khatir and *Tarjuman-ul-Quran* is not the fiery youth, who edited *Al-Hilal* or wrote *Tazkirah*. But by a strange irony, the vision that has caught the imagination of the people has come out of the pages of *Al-Hilal*, and Abul Kalam Azad, who has been really effective in the history of Muslim India, is emotional, revivalistic, Pan-Islamist, anti-modern, anti-intellectual. The forces which he set in motion in 1913 are being consolidated and led today by Maulana Maudoodi, the leader of Jamat-i-Islami. All those who want Pakistan to be a theocracy may or may not realise it, but they are following the path originally shown by the gifted editor of *Al-Hilal*. The leaders of the movement are conscious of this, and as recently as in 1946, some of them expressed the hope that Maulana who, in 1913, set the goal of *Hakumat-i-Ilahia* before Muslim India would take over their leadership. In a symposium on the subject the editor, gives long quotations from the pages of *Al-Hilal* and concludes:

"Amongst those interested in the establishment of a theocracy, will there be anyone who will have no love for the very first champion of this idea, and would not desire to see the leadership of the movement once again in his hands? Would to God that the blessed day would come—and come very soon—when, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Abul Ala Maudoodi, Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani, and Mufti Kifayat Ullah may all be seen in the same line!" [1]

All the four leaders mentioned in this passage were opposed to the establishment of Pakistan. Certainly Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has been a consistent opponent of the political leadership, which first secured various safeguards for the Muslims and later carved out a big territory for them out of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. But history is full of ironies. If Maulana Maudoodi and his co-workers were to succeed, Pakistan will be governed not by the ideals of Syed Ahmed Khan, Iqbal, and Jinnah but by those inspired by Abul Kalam Azad!

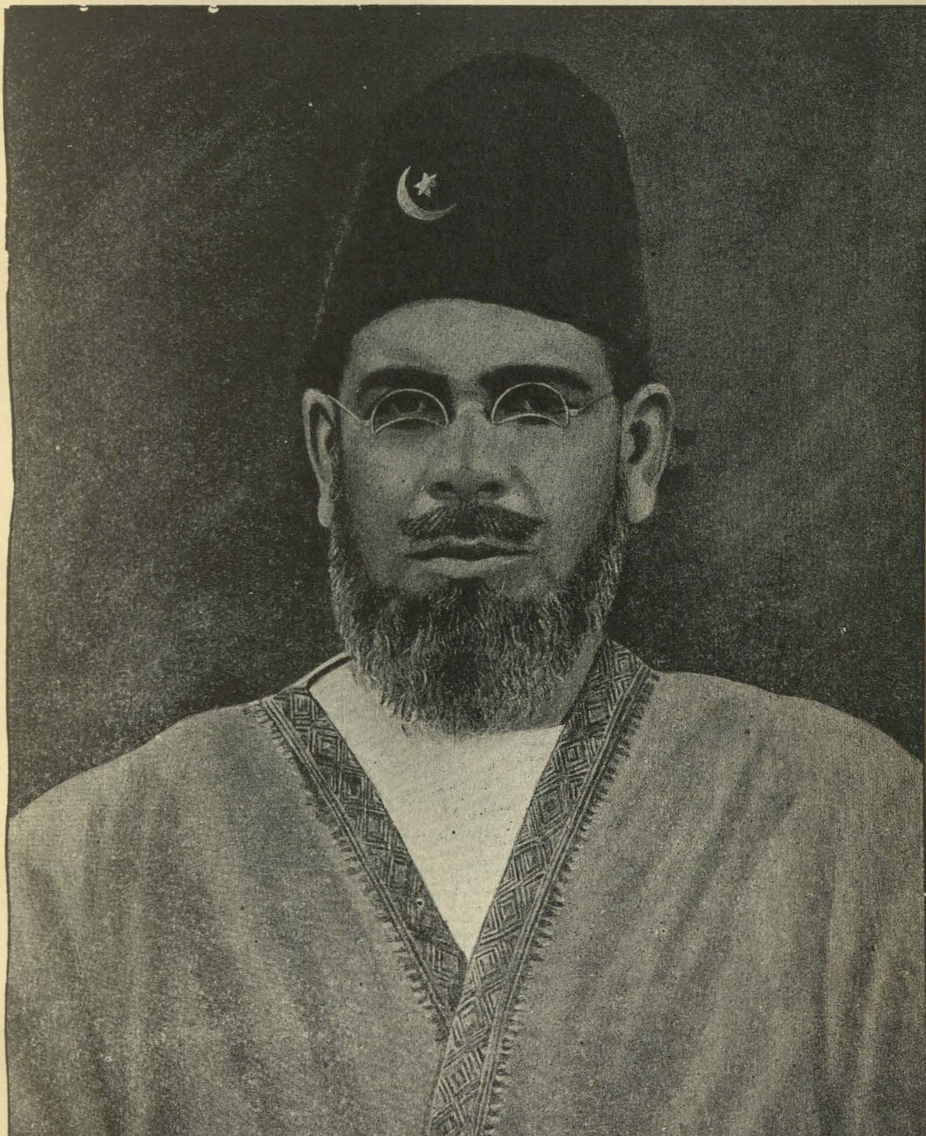
1. See *Hakumat-i-Ilahia aur Ulama-o-Mufakkarin*, p. 190.

CHAPTER 10

MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI
(1878–1931)

NOTHING can bring out more prominently the confusion which prevailed in Muslim politics from 1912 to 1937, the tempestuous passions of the period, and the very poor results of mighty efforts, than a study of the life of Maulana Muhammad Ali, who dominated the national stage for the greater part of this period. The policy of depending on the British to safeguard the interests of the Muslims, which was the sheet anchor of Syed Ahmed and Mohsin-ul-Mulk, was dead by the end of 1911. Annulment of the Partition of Bengal had killed it and Viqar-ul-Mulk had read the funeral oration. No intelligent, living, realistic policy had, however, yet taken its place. Viqar-ul-Mulk had, no doubt, advocated a policy of self-reliance, but the plant of Muslim political life was yet of too feeble a growth, and the future developments too uncertain and hazy to provide an active, visible course of action. Besides, no statesman with the constructive ability of Syed Ahmed or Mohsin-ul-Mulk was available to make the new policy a real success. The resultant confusion and uncertainty facilitated the task of leaders like Shibli and Abul Kalam Azad, who diverted the attention of the Indian Muslims from their own affairs to matters outside the country, and for many a long year Muslim India followed the Turkish will-o'-the-wisp.

Maulana Muhammad Ali was born in 1878. He was just an infant when his father passed away, but a wise mother gave a thorough education to him and his two brothers. In due course he reached Aligarh, where his 'Big Brother', Shaukat Ali was the idol of the cricket crowds. Muhammad Ali also took part in games, but he distinguished himself better in studies and in the degree examination headed the list of successful candidates from



(p. 158) MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI

U.P. He was, however, not a *persona grata* with the European staff, as both in the class-room and the debating hall of the Union, he displayed an uncompromising independence and was not easily amenable to discipline. Syed Sajjad Hyder, who was his contemporary at college, says that the Principal heaved a sigh of relief, when this self-willed young man left Aligarh for higher studies!

In England, Muhammad Ali entered Oxford University and started preparing for the Indian Civil Service. He, however, was unsuccessful, and after a brief interlude, in which he returned to India for a short time to get married, he got an Honours Degree at Oxford and finally returned home in 1902. On his arrival in India, he wished to join the staff of the Aligarh College. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk supported his application, but Theodore Morrison, who knew him in his college days, strongly opposed the proposal and ultimately he was not taken. This, naturally, hardened the young man in his attitude towards the European Principal!

Now Muhammad Ali turned to Indian States, and after a short spell at Rampur got a high appointment in Baroda. He served in all for seven years in Baroda, and filled many places with distinction. Political and journalistic interests were, however, constantly tempting him, and while in service, he took part in many affairs outside the State. He was a frequent contributor to *The Times of India* and his *Thoughts on the Present Discontent* saw the light of the day about this time. He was also present at the foundation of the All-India Muslim League, at Dacca and, at the suggestion of Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk, wrote an account of this historic event in a pamphlet entitled *Green Book*. His interest in Aligarh affairs was more direct and effective. He actively supported the College students, who were growing impatient under the disciplinary measures imposed by the European staff, and the Enquiry Commission, which was appointed to report on the College strike of 1907, referred to his articles as a contributory cause of the step taken by the students.

Maulana Muhammad Ali managed to keep himself in touch with Muslim affairs, even while in the State service, but it is not surprising that in course of time difficulties arose, and he felt that he needed a freer hand. He, therefore, left Baroda in 1910, and on 1 January, 1911, started *Comrade* from Calcutta. It was a great journalistic triumph. Muhammad Ali had made thorough preparations for the paper, and everything connected with it was of a high order. He himself wrote very well, and with the help of a gifted band of young men, gave Muslim India the best English weekly it has ever had.

The *Comrade* played an important part in moulding the political policy of Muslim India. In assessing the influences, which radically changed the outlook of the Muslims about 1912, it is worth remembering that the *Comrade* was started more than eighteen months before Abul Kalam Azad's *Al-Hilal* saw the light of the day, and the pioneering work, which this newspaper and the *Zamindar*, edited by Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, another Aligarian, did, has to be duly acknowledged. In most matters, Maulana Muhammad Ali agreed with Viqar-ul-Mulk, and his newspaper reflected the new era, which had been inaugurated at Aligarh. In internal politics, its policy was dubbed as that of a "Communal Patriot." It was fearless in denouncing discrimination and hardships to which the editor's countrymen were exposed, but it also systematically criticised the *Bengalee*, the *Tribune* and other Hindu newspapers, which were constantly criticising the newly organised All-India Muslim League, or the efforts of Aligarh leaders to secure suitable safeguards for Mussalmans. Maulana Muhammad Ali strongly supported the standpoint of Viqar-ul-Mulk, after the annulment of the Partition of Bengal, and wrote a series of articles dealing with "The Announcement."

The *Comrade* was originally published from Calcutta, but when the seat of Government was shifted to Delhi, *Comrade* followed suit. Early in 1913 Maulana Muhammad Ali started an Urdu newspaper, *Hamdard*, with a view to reach a still wider public.

In his unfinished autobiography, Maulana says that when he started the *Comrade*, he did not think that he would have to devote much time and space to affairs outside India. Fate had, however, decreed otherwise. Soon after the publication of the *Comrade*, Turkey was involved in war, at first with Italy and later with the Balkan powers. The sympathies of Muslim India for the Turks were deeply stirred, but it is doubtful whether but for another factor, the foreign affairs would have so thoroughly absorbed Muhammad Ali—and the Indian Muslims.

On 13 July, 1912, *Al-Hilal* saw the light of the day and very soon began to play a decisive role in the affairs of the community. Its gifted and ambitious editor, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, was an inveterate enemy of everything which was associated with Syed Ahmed Khan and the Aligarh leadership. Syed Ahmed Khan had advised the Indian Muslims to keep aloof from political agitation, as its results may be far from beneficial to a minority like theirs. With Abul Kalam Azad, active politics is a passion, nay, apart from religion, the only thing worth living and dying for. Syed Ahmed had devoted a lifetime to the spread of modern education and Maulana had nothing but contempt for the modern system of education and its products. The Aligarh leader stood for rationalism in religion and reform in social matters. Abul Kalam Azad was a revivalist and his two war-cries were "Back to the Qur'an" and "Islam in danger." Syed Ahmed wanted Indian Muslims to concentrate on their own affairs, while the young leader was all for political Pan-Islam!

Muhammad Ali was a distinguished alumnus of the Aligarh College, and had deep veneration for Sir Syed but his emotional nature readily responded to the religious revivalism and Pan-Islamic creed preached by Abul Kalam Azad. He not only echoed the sentiments expressed in the *Al-Hilal*, but soon found concrete means to express them. During the Balkan War, he organized a Medical Mission which under the leadership of Dr. Ansari visited Turkey and was the first "embassy of practical goodwill" sent by the Muslim India to a foreign Muslim country.

The *Comrade* did not start with any bitterness towards the British Government, but the annulment of the Partition of Bengal and the political tension engendered by the Tripoli and Balkan wars, affected its attitude. Before long, there were other causes, which fed the fires of hatred. The controversy about Muslim University was one, and before it died down, there was serious trouble at Cawnpore after the demolition, by the Public Works Department, of the portion of a mosque. Maulana Muhammad Ali took active part in the agitation for the restoration of the mosque and towards the end of 1913, headed a deputation consisting of himself and (Sir) Syed Wazir Hasan, Secretary All-India Muslim League, to place the Muslim case before the British Government. He also supported inclusion, in the aims and objects of the Muslim League, of efforts for establishment of "a suitable form of Self-Government for India."

This was the background of events, when the first World War broke out. Turkey had not yet declared her intentions, and speculation was rife about her probable attitude. At this juncture Maulana Muhammad Ali wrote an article on the "Choice of the Turks," in which he gave a long list of wrongs which Turkey had suffered at the hands of the British Government, but advised her to join the allies, in spite of that. The article cost the *Comrade* its security, and in May 1915, Maulana Muhammad Ali and his brother Shaukat Ali were interned under the Defence of India Ordinance.

When "The Ali Brothers" were, at last, released at the end of the war, they found themselves in an entirely new atmosphere. The political barometer touched heights, which it had never reached before. There was a tremendous outburst of pent-up feelings, released after years of suppression under censorship and other rigours of war-time administration. The way popular demonstrations were dealt with in the Punjab greately increased the prevailing tension. To this was added the keen resentment of Muslims at the treatment which the representatives of the Turkish Caliph were getting at the Peace Conference.

And soon a man appeared, who could fully exploit the pregnant situation. M. K. Gandhi who had served a period of political apprenticeship under most trying circumstances in South Africa, and had covered himself with glory, strode on the scene, which he was to dominate for the rest of his life. He at once realised that if the Hindus joined the Muslims in advocating the cause of Turkey, a combination would result, which the Government would find irresistible. He was not far wrong—at least for the time being—and soon to his planning and organizing skill, was added the dynamic personality of Muhammad Ali.

The scenes that followed cannot be easily imagined by those who did not see them. Hindus and Muslims literally drank water from one cup. Swami Shardhanand, who till then was bitterly hated by Muslims for his attempts to convert Muslim Rajputs to Hinduism and who a few years later was assassinated by a Muslim, was most welcome amongst the Musalmans. He was asked to address Muslim gatherings, and actually, on one occasion, addressed the Muslims from the pulpit of the grand mosque of Delhi!

Maulana Muhammad Ali was the principal Khilafat leader, and in 1920, left with a deputation for Europe to represent the views of the Indian Muslims on the future of Turkey. He urged that if the ordinances of Islam were to be carried out properly, the Turkish Caliph must remain in possession of "Jazirat-ul-Arab", including Iraq, Arabia, Syria and Palestine, with all the holy places situated therein. In making this demand, the Indian Muslims depended not only upon the *fatwas* of their *ulama* but on the statements made by the British ministers in the beginning of the war, declaring that they were not fighting to rob Turkey of her Asiatic territories. Maulana Muhammad Ali pleaded his case eloquently but the deputation did not achieve anything. Of course, with Mr. Lloyd George presiding over the destinies of the British Empire, the failure of the mission was a foregone conclusion, but the Indian Muslim leaders were also not well-informed about the state of feelings in Arabia. They were convinced that the Arab revolt against the Turks was due entirely to the treachery of Sharif Husain of Mecca and had no popular support. They forgot that although

the British had exploited the Arab desire for autonomy, yet that desire was there and had a certain historic basis. Turks were well aware of this, and were not urging the reincorporation of Arabia within Turkey, but the Indian Muslims relying on a theory of Caliphate and Pan-Islam, demanded this, and got no support, even from the Arabs.

In October 1920, Muhammad Ali returned empty-handed from Europe, and the question was taken up, as to what should be done to redress "the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs". Gandhi suggested a scheme of *Non-violent Non-co-operation*, which included surrender of British titles, boycott of councils, courts and government-aided educational institutions, and resignation from government service. Khilafat Conference was the first to adopt the scheme, which was later endorsed by the Indian National Congress, and came into force from 1 August, 1921.

The success of the scheme was only partial but considering the rigorous self-denial implicit in its adoption, it cannot be said to have completely failed. A sufficient number of people surrendered titles, resigned from service and committed themselves irretrievably to the nationalist cause, to form a sizable nucleus for struggle against the British government. Within two months Muhammad Ali confronted Aligarh authorities, with a demand that they shoulds ever relations with the government and give up government grant. This, the authorities stated, was not feasible, and not even desirable so long as a large number of college students looked to government service for their livelihood after their education. Muhammad Ali failed against the stout opposition put up by Dr. Zia-ud-din, but was much more successful with the boys. His eloquence completely won them over, and majority of the students left the college to join the National University started by him. This was the birth of the Jamia Millia Islamia (National Muslim University) which was later transferred to Delhi, and under the fostering care of Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Ansari, and Dr. Zakir Hussain, has become a flourishing institution with its own individuality and usefulness.

Khilafat movement was largely based on religious sentiments, and had from the beginning, attracted the *ulama* in large numbers. When the movement of *Non-Co-operation* failed to achieve all the promised results, ulama suggested more drastic and more theological remedies for the ills of the day. One of these - suggested by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad—was the *Fatwa* laying down that it was religiously unlawful (Haram) for Muslims to serve in the police and the army. This view was later adopted in the form of a resolution, at Karachi, and its advocacy led to imprisonment of Muhammad Ali for a period of two years. The *Fatwa* was widely hailed by the Hindu newspapers of the Punjab, who had always complained of the Muslim preponderance in the police and the army, but it had no serious results, as very few soldiers and policemen obeyed it.

The other religious prescription for the political ills of the day was the *Fatwa* regarding *Hijrat* (migration) from India. It was stated that India had become a *Dar-ul-Harab*, and all true Muslims should leave the country. Afghanistan of Aman-Ullah Khan was suggested as the obvious asylum and the ever-enthusiastic Amir also showed goodwill and encouragement. This had rather a pathetic sequence. Many simple, devout Muslims, especially from Sindh and the North-West Frontier Province, sold their lands and belongings for a song, and the trek to Kabul began. Nearly eighteen thousand people gathered in a few weeks, at the frontier of Afghanistan, and asked for admission. This alarmed the Amir. He was, presumably, sincere in his original offer of welcome, but never expected that such big hordes would invade his small and barren land. He declined to receive them and the poor *Muhajreen*, who had followed the *fatwas* of the *ulama*, returned sadder and wiser people, to dispute the sales which they had effected in such pious haste.

All this time Muslim India was in a frenzy. The attention of the community was wholly concentrated on "the Khilafat", without which, *ulama* said, the Friday prayers would not be valid. There were almost daily processions and meetings in all big towns and cities of the country, where hysterical speeches were made

and people shed tears at what would happen to Islam, if there were no Caliph left, except with the clipped powers, allowed by the Peace Conference. The dominant note was one of despair, and there appeared to be nothing left to the pious Muslims, except to lay down their lives for the Caliphate. The most popular song of the period, which found an echo in every Muslim heart, was:

بولی اماں محمد علی کی
جان بیٹا خلافت پہ دے دو

So spoke the mother of Muhammad Ali,
My son, lay down your life for the sake of Khilafat.

Before long, however, a shining star rose on the dark horizon. Lloyd George had paid no heed to the demands of Muslim India, and had unleashed the Greek armies in Asia Minor. Mustafa Kamal, however, completely upset his plans. He drove the Greeks out of Asia, and faced the jaded allied armies at Chanak with his victorious troops. Britain had, therefore, to decide whether or not she should carry out the policy of Lloyd George to its logical consequences, by actively intervening on behalf of the Greek allies. After negotiations the Conservatives withdrew their support from the Coalition Government, and Lloyd George had to resign. Mustafa Kamal was thus able to consolidate his victories and saved from the wreckage of the Turkish Empire, all that was essentially Turkish. He was now the hero of the Muslim India—one bright star, which had dispelled darkness. Illustrative of the enthusiasm, which now surrounded his name is a Punjabi song, whch was very popular at this time:

غازی مصطفیٰ پاشا کمال وے
تیریاں دور بلایاں
دیویں ھندیاں نوں آن جمال وے
کانوں دیریاں نیں لایاں

O Ghazi Mustafa Kamal Pasha,
May all your troubles disappear.
Come and show your face to us, Indians,
Why are you keeping us waiting so long ?

All this time the Indian Muslims were completely oblivious of their own problems. They had been taught since 1912, that Pan-Islam was not only their sole hope but a religious duty—and nothing else mattered. It is true that a few of the far-sighted leaders, (who, however, had little popular support at the time) continued to watch their interests, but for the masses that meant nothing. They were concerned only with the great religious institution of Khilafat, and the fact that Mustafa Kamal had restored Turkey to a position of importance foreshadowed for them the revival of the grandeur of the Caliphate!

They were, however, in for a rude shock. Their leaders, while rousing them to every possible sacrifice for Turkey and Caliphate had kept them - probably they themselves were—blissfully ignorant of what was passing within Turkey. Mustafa Kamal's efforts were not for the revival of the Caliphate, but for regeneration of Turkey. Himself a stern, realistic, unreligious soldier, he had no use for the show of an institution, which might have kept the pious Muslims in India on tenter-hooks, but which in the Great War brought no material advantage to his country. Far from restoring the glories of the Caliphate, he abolished it and expelled the Caliph from Turkey!

This, of course, was a most serious blow to the Khilafat leaders. For a time, they tried to ward it off, by disbelieving the news. "Reuter's lies." "The Usual British Propaganda." Later a more ingenuous theory was offered. "Mustafa Kemal himself aspires to the Caliphate, and so he had to expel the old, effete Caliph, who had hopelessly compromised himself with the Allies." Gradually, however, the grim truth began to prevail over the misty hues of sentimentality, and showed the hitherto popular leaders in a ridiculous light. They had said that the institution of Caliphate was essential to Islam. But here was a Muslim who not only refused to share this view but actully pulled down the hoary edifice!

Abolition of Caliphate had repercussions on the general policy of Muslim India, but to Muhammad Ali it meant not only a national but a personal blow. Of course, the theory that the Indian

Muslims were under any religious obligation to the Turkish Caliph was not his. It had been advocated by Abul Kalam Azad, the apostle of Pan-Islam in modern Muslim India, but Muhammad Ali with his dynamic, picturesque personality, and a real flair for popular appeal, had rapidly ousted him from the leadership of this movement. People looked to Muhammad Ali, as "the Khilafat leader," and with the abolition of Caliphate, his stock fell. But his loss was even greater than this. He lost what had been for years his spiritual anchor and the chief plank in his political policy.

For the time being, Muhammad Ali tried to hold fast to his vision of Pan-Islam, and at a conference held at Mecca this idealist from India tried to persuade Ibn Saud to surrender his newly won kingdom of Hejaz, and convert it into a model Muslim republic. His efforts failed, and like the other disappointed and disillusioned Indian Muslims, he had to turn his attention to affairs within the country. Here, also, prospects were not very bright. The glorious period of Hindu-Muslim unity had given place to an era of serious communal rioting, and the various Hindu and Muslim leaders, who had agreed so whole-heartedly on "the Punjab and Khilafat" question, differed sharply, when, with the working of the dyarchy, the question of Muslim share in services and legislature assumed practical importance.

Muhammad Ali struggled hard to arrest these disruptive tendencies. He re-started the *Comrade* and the *Hamdard*, and constantly preached, in their columns, the message of Hindu-Muslim unity. He tried to play the role of the peace-maker, by urging the point of view of the Muslims before his Hindu friends, and on the other hand, urging the Muslims to show faith and confidence in their fellow-countrymen. Soon, he found that his position was untenable and he had to make his choice. His hands were forced, as of his other namesake, on the constitutional issue. He was instrumental, along with Muhammad Ali Jinnah, in drawing up what were known as "Delhi Proposals" for settling the Hindu-Muslim problem. Under these proposals, the demands of Muslims regarding separation of Sindh, grant of reforms to North-West

Frontier, etc., were to be conceded by the Congress, and the Muslims were to give up Separate Electorates in favour of Joint Electorates. The proposals had the support of Mr. Srinivas Iyengar, the Congress President, and were adopted at the Madras Session of the Council of the All-India National Congress. Gandhi, however, did not favour them (as was stated by Maulana Shaukat Ali) and the whole question was referred to a committee, presided over by Pandit Motilal Nehru. The scheme submitted by this committee, known as the Nehru Report, proved a bitter pill, which neither Muhammad Ali Jinnah nor Maulana Muhammad Ali could swallow. They tried to have the scheme modified at the National Convention held at Calcutta in December 1928. They failed, and both came to the bitter conclusion that they could not come to an honourable agreement with the Indian National Congress on the question of Muslim demands.

Both these leaders had so far kept aloof from—in fact, they had actively opposed—the section of the All India Muslim League, presided over by Sir Muhammad Shafi, which had presented its case before the Simon Commission, and from the beginning had placed no faith in negotiations with the Congress leaders. Developments at Calcutta, however, forced them to join hands with the other Muslim leaders, and on January 1, 1928, both Maulana Muhammad Ali and Muhammad Ali Jinnah participated in a representative "All Parties Muslim Conference" held at Delhi, under the presidentship of H.H. the Aga Khan.

After 16 years, the course of events had forced Muhammad Ali to the same position in internal politics, with which he started, but he was not destined to live very long. His health was completely shattered by now, and on 21 February, 1931, he died in London where he had gone to attend the Round Table Conference.

Maulana Muhammad Ali's last years were marred by ill-health, and certain political developments, which he must have found most trying. Even the exact value of his concrete contribution to the welfare of his people may be a matter of opinion, but it would be wrong to under-rate his importance in our political

history. Nature had endowed him with extraordinary gifts—a dynamic personality, eloquence, sincerity, intense devotion to Islam, and inborn capacity for leadership. He infused a new vigour in our political life, and inspired many a noble soul. For almost a score of years he was the idol of the Muslim masses, and till Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah rejuvenated the Muslim League, and fired the imagination of the Muslims by his efforts for the achievement of Pakistan, no Muslim leader evoked so much enthusiasm as his warm-hearted namesake.

CHAPTER 11

IQBAL
(1877—1938)

THE pen is mightier than the sword. Aligarh had not been totally barren in realising Sir Syed's dream of producing Muslim leaders. Hasrat Mohani, Zafar Ali Khan and, above all, Maulana Muhammad Ali headed powerful movements, and dominated the public stage. Having, however, surrendered the intellectual supremacy to Abul Kalam Azad (and his master and collaborator, Shibli,) they had to dance to the tunes of the talented editor of *Al-Hilal.* It is true that ultimately this spell broke—or rather, the Pan-Islamic rope, on which they were dancing, gave way—but even then they showed no desire to come down to the steep, pedestrian path marked out by Syed Ahmed Khan. It was again for a man with a steady vision and mighty brains to brighten their paths and guide their footsteps. It is true that the road, which he showed, was essentially the path shown by the Aligarh leader. Basic national policies seldom die; desire for self-preservation is as much an instinct with nations, as with individuals. But the path was lit with a new, bright light, and the footsteps were guided by the magic voice of a poet.

I

Iqbal was born in 1877, at Sialkot, an old historic town on the borders of West Punjab and Kashmir. Like most figures, described in this book, he came from a poor family, but with the help of the scholarships, which he won at school and college, he was able to receive very good education. After his preliminary studies at Sialkot, he joined the Government College, Lahore, where he became a favourite pupil of (Sir) Thomas Arnold, who had left Aligarh and taken service at Lahore. He graduated in

1897, winning a scholarship and two gold medals for proficiency in English and Arabic, and finally took M.A. degree in Philosophy, in 1899.

After the completion of his educational career Iqbal was taken on the staff of the Government College, but his literary career, which was to overshadow all other aspects of his work had begun much earlier. About this time, Iqbal wrote the first Urdu book on economics, but even before that, he had started taking part in local poetic symposiums and had early attracted the attention of old masters. In 1901, (Sir) Abdul Qadir started an Urdu magazine—*Makhzan*—which was to provide a literary platform for so many rising writers, and as Iqbal was a friend of the editor, he had to contribute a poem, virtually to every issue of the magazine. The fame of Iqbal had also attracted the attention of the authorities of the Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam, an influential organization of Lahore, which aimed, among other things, at the spread of modern education among the Muslims. Iqbal started reading longish poems at the annual gatherings of this Anjuman, and soon established his fame as the rising poet of the Punjab.

Iqbal's pen was busy during these days, and he wrote poems on a wide range of subjects. Unluckily, Iqbal omitted a large number of verses, written in these days, in the final collection of his poems, first published, when he was nearly forty-five years old. Perhaps he did not like the immature style of his early verse, or more probably, with his altered views on many subjects, did not care for the sentiments expressed in these poems. From what has been preserved by Iqbal, and from what is available in some valuable "unauthorised" versions of his works, the poetry of this period would seem to fall under three heads. A few of the poems are on subjects connected with nature, and represent some of the most successful attempts made in Urdu, to imbibe the poetic traditions of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Cowper. In the other set of poems, we see Iqbal as a *sufi* and an avowed pantheist. In the third series, Iqbal is the champion of the new, rising nationalism of India. One of the longer poems of this

period is *Taswir-i-Dard* (Picture of Grief) which was read at a gathering of the Anjuman, held in March, 1904, and in which the poet bewails the differences and dissensions in his beloved country. In *Naya Shiwala* (the New Temple), the poet, equally impatient of the Brahmin and the Mulla, dreams of a New Temple, where love will reign supreme, and where the image of India will be worshipped. There are many poems of this period, expressing similar patriotic, nationalistic sentiments, but perhaps the most famous of them is the *Tarana-i-Hindi* (the Indian Anthem), which has been equally popular with all communities in India, and is, in the opinion of many impartial judges, a better expression of true, broad-minded Indian nationalism than the 'Bande-Matram' of Bankim Chandar Chatterji, which was originally included in "Anand Math", as a hymn of hatred against the Muslims.

II

The first period of Iqbal's poetic career ended in 1905, when he left for higher studies in Europe. He wrote a few beautiful lyrics in his old style when he was studying in England and Germany, but his attitude towards many questions underwent a profound change. Iqbal went to England a nationalist and a pantheist, but returned a Pan-Islamist and almost a puritan. The change was partly due to his researches in the history of Islamic mysticism. He wrote a thesis on "Development of Metaphysics in Persia" for his Ph.D. degree and during the course of his studies, came to the conclusion that *tasawwuf* (or the so-called Islamic Mysticism) had no solid, historical foundation in the original Islam. He wrote to his friend, Khwaja Hasan Nizami of Delhi asking him to provide some convincing proof for the theory that *tasawwuf* was an esoteric form of Islam. The answers did not satisfy him, and he gradually came to the conclusion that so far as Islam was concerned, *tasawwuf* was an alien and even an unhealthy growth.

He was also attracted more and more towards Islam as a social and political organization. Of course, he had never been indifferent towards Islam or Muslims, as his close association with

Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam would show, but now his attitude crystallised, and took a more tangible shape. He took active part in the meetings of the Islamic Society, which some Indian Muslims had organised in London, and was one of those who were responsible for changing its name to Pan-Islamic Society. He delivered a series of lectures on Islam dealing with such subjects as "Certain Aspects of Islam", "Islamic Tasawwuf", "Influence of Islam on European Civilization", "Islamic Democracy," and "Islam and Human Intellect." The first poetic indication about his change of attitude came in March 1907, when he wrote a famous *ghazal*:

> The time of unveiling has come, the beloved will be seen by all.
> The secret which was veiled by silence shall now become manifest.
> That time, cup-bearer, has gone when the lovers of wine drank in hiding;
> The whole world will now be a tavern, and all will drink in the open.
> For, the silence of Mecca has proclaimed to the expectant ear at last,
> That the compact made with the desert-dwellers shall be enforced again.
> That lion which emerged out of the wilderness and upset the Empire of Rome,
> I hear from the angels, shall awaken once more.
> O dwellers of Western lands, God's world is not a shop!
> That which you considered good coin shall prove to be counterfeit.
> Your civilization will kill itself with its own dagger;
> A nest built on a slender bough will not last for ever.

Another important poem reflecting the new attitude was written when Iqbal was returning to India in August 1908. His ship passed near Sicily, which at one time was under the sway of Muslims. The sight of this island, which once belonged to the Muslims, affected the poet so deeply that he wrote a touching

elegy, comparable to the poems of Sa'di on the fall of Baghdad, of Dagh on the sack of Delhi (1857) and of Ibn Badrun on the fall of Granada:

> Weep to thy heart's content, O blood-weeping eye,
> Yonder is visible the grave of Muslim culture.
> Once this place was the tent of those dwellers of the desert,
> For whose ships the ocean was a playground,
> Who raised earthquakes in the courts of mighty emperors,
> In whose sabres lay hidden life-scorching flames,
> Whose birth tolled the knell of effete ideals,
> With whose fear the strongholds of falsehood trembled,
> Whose electric touch revived life in the world,
> And broke the chains of superstition.
> Tell me of thy anguish; I too am full of pain.

* * *

> I am the dust raised by that caravan which once broke its journey here.
> Paint to me that picture of the old,
> Rouse me by telling the tale of bygone days;
> I shall carry thy gift to India,
> And make others weep as I weep now.

On his return from Europe, the spiritual and the ideological changes which Iqbal was undergoing, deepened. We have an interesting letter of this period illustrating the process by which Iqbal changed from an Indian nationalist to a champion of Muslim nationhood. In 1909, he was invited to Amritsar to attend a meeting of Minerva Lodge, which was a cosmopolitan organization with membership open to the Hindus and the Muslims. Iqbal politely declined the invitation and in the course of the correspondence, which ensued, he wrote on 28 March, 1909:

"I have myself been of the view that religious differences should disappear from this country, and even now, act on this

principle, in my private life. But now I think that the preservation of their separate national entities is desirable for both the Hindus and the Muslims. The vision of a common nationhood for India is a beautiful ideal, and has a poetic appeal, but looking to the present conditions and the unconscious trends of the two communities, appears incapable of fulfilment." [1]

Iqbal had by now come to believe that the Hindus and Muslims were bound to work out their national destinies separately, and his own course of action was clear. He was to use such poetic talent as he possessed to bring Muslims together and to hasten the day, when Islam would really fulfil its spiritual and cultural mission in the world. One of the most significant expressions of the poet's new attitude was the "Islamic Anthem," composed about this time. Written in the same metre and rhyme, as the original Indian anthem, but even more inspired, the poem at once became popular. Another poem of this period which attracted great attention was *Shikwa* (The Complaint) which was recited at the annual session of Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam in 1911. In it, the poet, as the mouthpiece of Muslims, bitterly complains to God, that although, of all the people in the world, the Muslims have done most to promote the worship of one God, they are being singled out by Providence for all sorts of misfortunes:

> There are nations besides us; there are sinners amongst them
> too,
> Humble folk and those intoxicated with pride, slothful,
> careless and clever,
> Hundreds are there, who detest Thy name,
> But Thy Grace descends on their dwellings,
> And nothing but the lightning strikes us!

Another important poem was *Shama-o-Shair* (The Candle and the Poet) written in March 1912. In it the candle teaches the poet, how to carry out his poetic mission of enlightening and inspiring his people, and the poet gives for the first time, that

1. Quoted in *Safina-i-Hayat* of Munshi Ghulam Qadir Farrukh, p. 23.

message of hope, courage, and good cheer, which was to become the dominant note of Iqbal's poetry.

In August 1912, *Al-Hilal* appeared and as has been mentioned already, had a powerful effect on Muslim intelligentsia. Iqbal did not remain unaffected by its message. As a matter of fact, it has been claimed by a colleague of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, that it was *Al-Hilal* which showed Iqbal the new path of Islam.[1] Iqbal in his letters, has challenged the statement, and anybody acquainted with the chronology of Iqbal's published works would have no hesitation in fully endorsing his statement. It cannot, however, be denied that Iqbal, along with other Muslims of India, was affected by the new anti-western *atmosphere* of emotional frenzy created by *Al-Hilal.* The original version of Iqbal's *Jawab-i-Shikwa*, written in October 1912, contained verses closely echoing *Al-Hilal's* attitude on the proposed Muslim University and even the Muslim League. At a later date also he wrote about the modern education:

> This new wine will weaken the mind still further ;
> This new light will only intensify the darkness.

The truth is that Iqbal was influenced, not only by Abul Kalam Azad, but by Shibli, Akbar of Allahabad, and even Suleman Nadvi, and to their influence can be traced those elements in his works, which Wilfred Cantwell Smith has called "reactionary" in his analysis of the mental make-up of the poet.

Iqbal used to write occasional poems, inspired or suggested by various topics of the day, but before long he undertook a more ambitious task. In 1915 was published the first edition of his long Persian poem—on the "Secrets of Self"—in which he urged the need of development of self and attacked those poets and *sufis* who seemed to ignore or oppose it. The book raised a storm of opposition. Iqbal had criticised the celebrated Persian poet, Hafiz, who had many admirers in India. More than that, he had

1. See Introduction to *Tazkirah* of Abul Kalam Azad.

attacked Islamic mysticism as effete and enervating. A fierce controversy ensued, in which some of Iqbal's erstwhile admirers, like Khwaja Hasan Nizami, were ranged against him. Iqbal defended himself with vigour and skill, but he omitted in the next edition, those verses on Hafiz, which had given offence, and also the long introduction, in which he had urged people to study Western thought—in particular English literature—which was free from morbid, pantheistic influences.

In 1918, Iqbal published *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* (Secrets of Non-Ego) dealing with the development of the national ego. This was a much more inspired book than the first, and as it raised no controversial issues, its popularity was immediate and widespread.

Shortly after the publication of *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* the Great War came to an end and as a result of the treatment meted out to Turkey at the Peace Conference, Khilafat movement was started in India. For a very brief interval Iqbal was attracted by the movement. He wrote a poem welcoming "Ali Brothers" on their release, and in some small pieces praised Mahatma Gandhi.[1] He, however, soon grew distrustful of the movement, and wrote ironic verses regarding the Khilafat deputation, visiting England "with a begging bowl." The Hijrat movement finally convinced him that either the popular leaders lacked intelligence or were completely indifferent to the welfare of Indian Muslims. He kept aloof from the non-co-operation movement and resisted the attempts to convert the Islamia College of Lahore into a Gandhian institution.

Since 1907, Iqbal had been giving expression to a vague yearning for Muslim solidarity and brotherhood. That, however, had not involved him in any conflict with his countrymen, and in fact (as could be more clearly seen in Mahatma Gandhi's support to the Khilafat movement) the Hindu nationalists, have been—for temporary political advantages—encouraging a sort of Pan-Islam, which facilitated the formation of a common front against the British.

1. Omitted from *Bang-i-Dara*, but may be read in *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal* published at Hyderabad.

This blissful state of affairs, however, came to an end, when events nearer home began to assume importance. In 1921, a sort of dyarchy was introduced in the provinces, and the Punjab got two able Ministers in Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, and Lala Harkishan Lal. At that time, Muslims were in a clear majority in the Punjab, but apart from their share of agricultural lands, which could not be alienated owing to the Land Alienation Act, they were fast approaching the level of untouchables. Their share in commerce and industry was negligible. The Punjab University was almost an exclusively Hindu institution. The political stage was largely dominated by the Hindu lawyer. The public offices and Government institutions had become inaccessible like the caste guilds, in which it was extremely difficult for a Muslim to obtain entry, and even if he somehow managed to gain admission, he would find that the dice was heavily loaded against him. Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, a skilful and determined administrator, tried to break this monoply so far as his departments were concerned. Actually he did not attempt to go very far. He even did not aim at securing for Muslims representation in services, according to their population, but he felt that if the Muslims were granted the same share in services which was allowed to them, udner the agreed Lucknow Pact, in respect of legislature, and which was nearly 16% less than their proportion of population, surely the Hindus should have no cause for complaint. He was, however, mistaken. His policy created a flutter amongst the vested interests, which the present generation cannot even imagine. The so-called nationalist paper, the *Tribune*, was then, as ever, wedded to a policy of resolutely (nay, blindly) opposing anything and everything, which might benefit the Muslims. Its columns were reserved for years, for a condemnation of Sir Fazl-i-Hussain's policy. The public platform and the provincial council echoed the Hindu resentment at any attempt to make them share their exclusive preserves with any other section of the population.

This agitation opened the eyes of the Punjab Muslims to the problem they had to deal with. Iqbal who was an old classfellow and a friend of Sir Fazl-i-Hussain saw more of the conflict than an average Muslim did, and was more deeply affected. About the

same time events occurred, which were to drive a bigger wedge between the Hindus and Muslims. There were serious communal riots at Multan and other places. Swami Shardhanand started a well-organized and well-financed movement for converting Muslims to Hinduism, and this was naturally resented by the Muslims. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya started his Hindu Sangathan (Hindu Consolidation) Movement which did not flourish, as the educated Hindus saw, that the interestof a majority could be even better safeguarded by an organization (like the Congress) with a "National" label, but the move increased Muslim apprehensions. In the Punjab, the administration of the High Court under Sir Shadi Lal, whose policy seems to have been to keep out every able and self-respecting Muslim, was another running sore. Iqbal, who in 1926 had agreed to stand for the local legislature, and was now a member of the Punjab Legislative Council saw closely what was happening, how the Hindus and Muslims distrusted each other, and were ranged in opposite, hostile camps, kept from a bitter civil war, only by the strong hand of the British army.

Iqbal studied the situation and realised that this surely was not leading to the building up of a common nationhood. Many years earlier, he had noticed "the unconscious trends" of the two people, but now his worst fears seemed to be coming true. His views crystallised, and he began to urge that the Hindus and the Indian Muslims were two separate nations, and any future constitutional arrangements must be based on the clear recognition of that fact. The events outside India also helped this tendency. Turkey, which was formerly the hope of the Muslim world lost her big empire in the Great War. There was no other first-rate or even second-rate Muslim power. Indian Muslims who were previously obsessed by a sense of their inadequacy now began to feel that, after all, they may have to become the main prop of the Muslim world. Iqbal said, in this connection, that "Indian Muslims, who happen to be a more numerous people than the Muslims of all other Asiatic countries put together, ought to consider themselves, the greatest asset of Islam and should sink in their own deeper self like other Muslim nations of Asia, in order to gather up their scattered sources of life and according to Sir

Fazl's advice 'stand on their own legs."[1]

The climax of Iqbal's political career, came in 1930, when, at the annual session of All-Indian Muslim League, he set, for the first time, before the Indian Muslims, the national goal of what later came to be known as Pakistan. In his presidential address, he said:

"I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sindh and Baluchistan, amalgamated into a single state. Self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India."[2]

IV

Iqbal's speech at the League session created a mild flutter amongst the political dovecots, but generally it was not taken seriously. Iqbal was invited next year to England to attend the Round Table Conference, and there, while dealing with the future of the Punjab, a scheme of Sir Geoffery Corbet was considered, which might have facilitated the adoption of Iqbal's proposals, but they were, by themselves, never brought before the Conference. Iqbal was, however, during his stay in England, able to make some valuable contacts. He had, for one thing, many meetings with Mohammad Ali Jinnah, whom he was able to interest in his scheme for the future of India and who was to make this "poetic dream" a living reality. Another person who met him in England was Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, a Cambridge student, who had been greatly attracted by Iqbal's political proposals. He published pamphlets on the subject, and some outsiders, like Halide Edib, have taken Chaudhri Rahmat Ali to be the author of the Pakistan scheme. The truth, however, is that Iqbal was the first to put it up in a reasonably practical form, and bring it

1. *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, p. 188,
2. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

for serious consideration before the biggest political organization of the Muslims. The fulfilment of the scheme—a far more difficult task—has been largely the work of Jinnah. Chaudhri Rahmat Ali had, however, his own contribution to make.

Lately there has been some controversy in the Lahore press regarding the role of Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, and it may be useful to give the version of an outsider. Ram Gopal in his book on Indian Muslims after quoting extensively from Iqbal's presidential address at Allahabad goes on to say, "The League session did not incorporate the presidential suggestion in any resolution, but it stunned Hindus and Sikhs who, in the light of the utterances of some Muslim leaders during the previous two decades, had expressed apprehensions at the Muslims of the north-west of India making common cause with Afghanistan. They now whispered to each other that their apprehensions were not unfounded. The suggestion apparently made no impression on the Muslim delegates in London, but it stirred up the feeling of a body of Muslims who had gathered round the delegates. They requested the Muslim delegation to make the Iqbal speech the basis of the Muslim demand at the Round Table Conference. Having failed to get the attention of the delegates at the Conference, they formed themselves into a committee and began to propagate the idea."[1] He amplifies the subject further at pages 269-70 of his book. After quoting at length from the Quaid's speech at the time of the adoption of Lahore Resolution in 1940, he adds: "The idea which Jinnah and this resolution put forward was not new. It was first mooted by Sir Muhammad Iqbal at the 1930 annual session of the League." He gives another long quotation from Iqbal's address and continues to say: "Shortly after this, at the Round Table Conference, a few Muslim students in London had canvassed support among the Muslim delegates to the Conference for a proposal to partition India into a Muslim India and a Hindu India. Leading Muslim delegates dismissed the suggestion as a 'students' scheme', and took no notice of it during their discussion of the electoral system. But the students doggedly pursued the idea, and

1. Ram Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

two years later, four of them—Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, Mohammad Aslam Khan, Mohammad Sadiq, and Inayatullah Khan—circulated a four-page leaflet from Cambridge in January 1933, at the time of the third Round Table Conference, saying that while Sir Iqbal 'proposed the amalgamation of these (Muslim) provinces into a single state forming a unit of the All-India Federation, we propose that these provinces should have a separate federation, of their own'."[1] "These sentiments were presented on behalf of our thirty million Muslim brethren who live in Pakstan, by which we mean the five northern units of India, *viz.*, Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan. (Pakstan—land of the pure—was later adopted as the name of the new Muslim state, and spelled as Pakistan)."[2] In the four-page leaflet entitled 'Now or Never' expression Pakistan was used, possibly for the first time in print, though Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, Khwaja Abdur Rahim and their co-workers had started using it in conversation much earlier.

The writer of these pages was in England from 1931 to 1933 and had frequent opportunities not only to meet Iqbal during his visits to the Round Table Conference but also met Chaudhri Rahmat Ali and in fact worked with him in connection with Iqbal Literary Association. At this time Chaudhri Rahmat Ali's attitude was that of an admirer of Iqbal, who was greatly impressed by Iqbal's proposal and had enthusiastically taken it up to give it a more concrete shape. A small group photograph of Iqbal with Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, Khwaja Abdur Rahim, Pir Ahsan-ud-Din and three others who were closely interested in the scheme was taken at this time.[3] Chaudhri Rahmat Ali was an enthusiastic member of Iqbal Literary Association which arranged functions in honour of Iqbal, and it was at his insistence that the second reception was presided over by Sir Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana, with whom Chaudhri Saheb used to stay during his visits to London. All this time Rahmat Ali was an enthusiastic admirer of Iqbal but as stated by his contemporary and co-worker Mian Abdul Haq, President of Pakistan National Congress organised by the Muslim

1. Ram Gopal, *op. cit*, pp. 269-270.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 270.
3. See photograph No. 47 at the end of *Ruzgar-i-Faqir*, Vol. II.

students at Cambridge, later his attitude changed. In July 1935 Rahmat Ali circulated another four-page leaflet in which he proclaimed himself the founder of Pakistan National Movement. Mian Abdul Haq has described at length the changes in Rahmat Ali's mental make-up, resulting from a study of major Nazi works, of which he knew many passages by heart,[1] his criticism of Quaid-i-Azam[2] and his severe condemnation of the final plan for the division of the sub-continent.

Mian Abdul Haq has stated that the name *Pakistan* first occurred to Khwaja Abdur Rahim.[3] Another Cambridge contemporary, Dr. Jahangir Khan, confirmed this in reply to an oral inquiry by this writer. Even if Chaudhri Rahmat Ali was not the author of the name of Pakistan, there is no doubt that he was the life and soul of the original efforts for popularization of the demand for Pakistan and that within the means of a Cambridge student, he worked energetically, boldly and enthusiastically for his mission.

Chaudhri Rahmat Ali's name deserves to be remembered with gratitude by all well-wishers of Pakistan. This, however, need not involve any injustice to Iqbal whose contribution, made long before Rahmat Ali appeared on the scene, is a simple matter of printed record. He put forward the scheme in a concrete, tangible form at the principal political platform of Muslim India, gave the proposal the prestige of his illustrious name, and worked for its success. Not only did he put forward the scheme and encourage all who worked for it, but in the course of his stay in England, during informal conversation with the people he met, explained and argued for it. Naturally details of his informal conversations

1. See *Nawai-Waqt*, Lahore of 1 July, 1964.

2 In fairness to Quaid-i-Azam it may be mentioned that at the request of Khwaja Abdur Rahim and others, he addressed a letter to Chaudhri Rahmat Ali asking for his association in the active struggle for Pakistan, but this help was not forthcoming. After Chaudhri Rahmat Ali's death at Cambridge his debts were paid by the Pakistan Government. His papers are reported to have been destroyed by the Master of Emanual College.

3. Vide *Nawai-Waqt*, Lahore, of June 27, 1964.

are not on record, but there are enough indications about the lines on which he was working. For example, in a letter addressed to the Quaid he refers to Lord Lothian's remark made to him that his "scheme was the only possible solution of the troubles of India, but it would take 25 years to come."[1] This remark, made before the end of 1932, would show that by then Iqbal had won over a man of Lord Lothian's calibre. Nearer home he had taken more active measures. At Lahore even before his address at Allahabad he got editorials written in the daily *Inqilab* urging that a Conference to consider the problems of Muslim majority provinces should be held. For holding this Conference a Reception Committee was organised, with Iqbal as the Chairman and Messrs Majid Malik and Syed Habib as Secretaries. This "Upper-India Muslim Conference" was not held—presumably as Iqbal found an opportunity to put forward his scheme at the annual session of the Muslim League—but notice of this Conference appeared repeatedly on the front page of *Inqilab* under the heading "Punjab, Frontier, Sind and Baluchistan are one country."[2]

In the leaflet issued from Cambridge in January 1933, Iqbal's state is referred to as a "Unit of All-India Confederation." Iqbal's specific scheme quoted above does not wholly justify this description. It is true that elsewhere he said, "What are called residuary powers must be left entirely to self-governing states, the central federal state exercising only those powers which are expressly vested in it by free consent of the federal states." It will be seen that even here Iqbal refers to "self-governing states," but there was provision for these states, vesting by free consent, certain powers in the central federal state. This was exactly the position which the All-India Muslim League took before the Cabinet Mission in May, 1946.

Iqbal's eminence as a poet has obscured his role as a politician, and a proper study of his work in the national field has not been made. If this is done, it will be found that not only did he put

1. *Iqbal's letters to Mr. Jinnah*, p. 21.
2. Abdus Salam Khurshid, article in *Mashriq*, Lahore of 1-4-64.

forward a potent idea, which provided the key to the solution of India's constitutional problem, but he took active part in many political activities of the day—*e.g.*, in the Kashmir agitation of 1931. Particularly, in freeing the Punjab from the Unionist hegemony he played a crucial role. When the Quaid's negotiations with Fazl-i-Hussain broke down, and he had to reorganise the Muslim League in the Punjab in the face of heavy odds, Iqbal was his main pillar of strength. He became the head of the Provincial Muslim League, and in spite of ill-health worked hard. Luckily Quaid preserved and later published the letters which he received from Iqbal in these days, and they throw ample light not only on Iqbal's activities within the province, but the moral support which he gave to the Quaid, during the lean years of the Muslim League.

All this time Iqbal had kept up his literary and intellectual pursuits. *Payam-i-Mashriq* (Message of the East), easily the most beautiful collection of Iqbal's Persian lyrics, appeared in 1923, the year in which the author was knighted. *Bang-i-Dara*, the collection of Urdu poems, followed a year later. Iqbal was now incontestably at the head of the poets and thinkers of Muslim India. Even those who violently differed from his political and social theories read his poetry with delight, and recognised that in him Muslim India had a deep, courageous and original thinker, like whom it had not known anyone since the days of Sheikh Mujaddid of Sirhind and Shah Wali Ullah of Delhi. When Iqbal visited England at the end of 1931 to attend the Round Table Conference, His Highness the Agha Khan and others gave a reception to meet the Muslim poet. Amongst those who came to join in this homage to Iqbal were Mahatma Gandhi, Lord Reading, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Dr. Nicholson, and a host of other non-Muslim celebrities. Next year Dr. Iqbal visited England again, and once more a reception was arranged in his honour. Amongst those invited to this function, Dr. Ansari, the nationalist Muslim leader, was unable to come, but the letter which he wrote from Freiburg may be taken as an indication of the respect which Iqbal's literary and intellectual gifts inspired even in the minds of his political opponents. Dr. Ansari wrote to the secretary of the organisation which arranged the function:

"I am much obliged to you for invitation to the reception given to Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal, *our greatest national poet and philosopher.* Nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to express my admiration to Dr. Iqbal as a poet and to pay my homage to him..."[1]

Iqbal was, by now, a recognised leader of Muslims, and took active part in the affairs of the day. In this connection what baffled some of his admirers, and resulted in an exchange of letters between him and Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru was the energetic action he advocated against the Qadianis in 1934 and 1935. A certain under-current of resentment against the Qadianis has always existed amongst the Muslims, and can be explained, apart from other things, by the attitude of the Qadianis towards other Muslims. This dormant antipathy flared up, when about this time, a capable Qadiani - Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan— and neither Nawab of Chhatari nor Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, was selected to succeed Sir Fazl-i-Hussain on the Viceroy's Executive Council. Ahrars, also, had developed some sharp differences with Qadianis during their agitation against the Kashmir Government. It was at this juncture that Iqbal intervened in the controversy, and in a manner which surprised many who had always considered Iqbal as a liberal, progressive thinker. In a statement on "Qadianis and Orthodox Muslims," which has been now reproduced in the "Speeches and Statements of Iqbal" he criticised the policy of non-interference in religion adopted in India by the British and expressed his fervent appreciation of "the orthodox Hindus' demand for protection against religious reforms in the new constitution." As regards the Qadianis, he asked the 'Rulers of India' to declare the Qadianis a separate community. This will, he said, correspond with the policy of Qadianis themselves and "the Indian Muslim will tolerate them just as he tolerates the other religions."[2]

The Qadiani controversy subsided in due course, but Iqbal's

1. Letter dated 14-12-32 to M. A. H. Siddiqi, Secy: Iqbal Literary Association, London.

2. *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, p. 98.

energetic advocacy of unreformed orthodoxy, against not only Qadianism, which most Muslims do not consider a religious reform, but against reform in general caused surprise to not a few. Iqbal was a bold and original thinker. At one time, he was a vigorous champion of all reforms that were necessary to improve the position of the Muslims. But specially after his return from England, he had been subjected to the influence of Shibli, Akbar, and Abul Kalam Azad, who were more concerned with the preservation of what they considered to be 'Islamic' institutions than with the steps that would improve the existing conditions and ensure the future of the Muslim people. There is no doubt that Iqbal was deeply influenced by Akbar of Allahabad. He wrote poems frankly in imitation of Akbar, and in his address to the Aligarh students, delivered in 1911, paid eloquent homage to that clever and effective, but perhaps dim-eyed epigrammatist. These orthodox tendencies possibly grew stronger after the hostile reception with which Iqbal's *Asrar-i-Khudi* was greeted. Now he became more tactful, even more timid, where orthodoxy was concerned. For years, he worked on a treatise, which aimed at co-ordination of Islamic Law with the requirements of the modern age, but before he would issue it, the book must win the approval of Syed Suleman Nadvi and Maulvi Abdul Majid Daryabadi. In the end Iqbal virtually allowed himself to be overruled by people, who not only had an altogether a different approach to the problem, but were certainly not his equals in intellectual ability, and a large part of the book was suppressed.[1]

While one is surprised at the warm, almost uncritical regard, which Iqbal had for the *ulama* of Lucknow, there is no denying the fact that he was more fully alive to the needs of the moment. Iqbal was the first to oppose the general tendency amongst Indian Muslims to run down the Kamalist reforms in Turkey. He was amused by the efforts to force hats on people—'the brain remains the same, whether you wear a hat or a turban'—and other attempts to imbibe the superficial rather than the inner

1. See the relevant letters in *Iqbal-Namah*, I, including the significant note by Maulvi Abdul Majid Daryabadi on p. 238.

causes of Western progress, but in general he watched the Turkish experiment with interest, even with sympathy. In his public controversy with Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, he warmly contested the charge that Turkey had ceased to be an Islamic country, and tried to justify many of the measures which Kamal Ataturk had taken. "In excluding the myth-making Mulla from the religious life of the people," he said, "the Ataturk has done what would have delighted the heart of an Ibn Taimyya or Shah Wali Ullah." In his "Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam," he made sympathetic references to Turkey, and advised the Indian Muslims to keep in close touch with what was passing on in Islamic countries.

Another question on which he had very much of an open mind, in spite of his orthodoxy, was Communism. Of course, Iqbal was firmly opposed to the irreligious tendencies of Russian Communism but he greatly appreciated the Communist efforts to readjust the existing disparity between various sections of the society. Long before the "Progressive Writers Association" came into existence, he wrote stirring poems on the present inequalities (like the "*Inqilab, Inqilab, O Inqilab*" of *Zabur-i-Ajam*) and was the first among the Indian Muslim writers of note to make appreciative references to the Russian experiment. As a matter of fact, in a letter to Sir Francis Younghusband he went so far as to say:

"Since Bolshevism plus God is almost identical with Islam, I should not be surprised if, in the course of time, either Islam would devour Russia or Russia Islam." [1]

Iqbal was a product of conflicting forces, and advanced Muslim socialists as well as reactionaries of the deepest dye can find verses in his works to support their conflicting ideologies. Basically, however, his was a vigorous mind, untrammelled by convention, and facing forwards rather than backwards. He dearly loved Islamic institutions—even sympathised with Muslim

1. *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, p. 151.

prejudices—but the fundamental fact which some of his so-called admirers forget is that his conception of Islam was "dynamic" rather than "static." Indeed, according to him, it would not be Islam, if the truths it enunciated were not "living" enough to be capable of adjustment to varying circumstances. "As a cultural movement," he says, "Islam rejects the old static view of the universe and reaches a dynamic view." Even in the relatively circumscribed field of Islamic law, he was always seeking what he called "The Principle of Movement" and one has only to study the sixth lecture in his "Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam" to realise what a gulf separated him from ordinary champions and interpreters of Shariat.

In this lecture—headed "The Principle of Movement in the Structure of Islam"—he gives a brief account of the conflict in Turkey between the Religious Reform Party led by Said Halim Pasha and the Turkish Nationalists headed by Mustafa Kamal. Iqbal's sympathies are with Said Halim, at one time the Grand Vizier of Turkey, but he is at pains to point out that Said Halim "reaches practically the same conclusion as the Nationalist Party." After giving a summary of Said Halim's views, he says:—

"Such are the views of the Grand Vizier of Turkey. You will see that following a line of thought more in tune with the spirit of Islam, he reaches practically the same conclusion as the Nationalist Party, that is to say, the freedom of Ijtihad with a view to rebuild the law of Shari'at in the light of modern thought and experience."[1]

Iqbal would have personally preferred the evolutionary method of Said Halim to revolutionary changes introduced by Mustafa Kamal, but so far as the right of Muslims to reinterpret and readjust their law to altered conditions is concerned, his views were very emphatic:

"Did the founders of our schools ever claim finality for their

1 *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp. 156-57.

reasonings and interpretations ? Never. The claim of the present generation of Muslim liberals to reinterpret the foundational legal principles, in the light of their own experience and the altered conditions of modern life is, in my opinion perfectly justified. The teaching of the Quran that life is a process of progressive creation necessitates that each generation, guided but unhampered by the work of its predecessors, should be permitted to solve its own problems." [1]

Towards the end of his life, Iqbal wished to write a separate book on "Reconstruction of Islamic Jurisprudence." Unluckily death intervened, but the observations, which Iqbal has made on this subject in his "Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam" are remarkably alike for their wisdom and originality. Perhaps the most useful of these is his emphasis on "Ijma," and the form it should take under modern conditions. He says, "The third source of Muhammadan Law is Ijma, which is, in my opinion, perhaps the most important legal notion in Islam." According to Iqbal, the proper agency for utilising this recognised source of Islamic Law would be "a Muslim Legislative Assembly." After indicating why the Omayad and Abbasid Caliphs found it more convenient to "leave the power of Ijtihad to individual Mujtahids rather than encourage the formation of a permanent assembly, which might become too powerful for them," he adds:

"The growth of republican spirit, and the gradual formation of legislative assemblies in Muslim lands constitutes a great step in advance. The transfer of the power of Ijtihad from individual representatives of schools to a Muslim legislative assembly which, in view of the growth of opposing sects, is the only possible form Ijma can take in modern times, will secure contributions to legal discussion from laymen who happen to possess a keen insight into affairs. In this way alone we can stir into activity the dormant spirit of life in our legal system, and give it an evolutionary outlook." [2]

1 *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 168.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 173-74.

Dealing with the question of relationship between the *ulama* and a Muslim legislative assembly, Iqbal refers to the provision in the Persian constitution of 1906 for a separate ecclesiastical committee of *ulama*—"conversant with the affairs of the world"—to supervise the legislative activity of the Majlis. Iqbal considers this a "dangerous arrangement," and thinks that the proper place of the *ulama* is within the Muslim legislative assembly, where they should help and guide free discussion. After describing the Shia constitutional theory, which might have been responsible for the peculiar arrangement in Iran, Iqbal says :

"But whatever may be the Persian constitutional theory, the arrangement is not free from danger, and may be tried, if at all, only as a temporary measure in Sunni countries. The *ulama* should form a vital part of a Muslim legislative assembly helping and guiding free discussion on questions relating to law. The only effective remedy for the possibilities of erroneous interpretations is to reform the present system of legal education in Muhammadan countries, to extend its sphere, and to combine it with an intelligent study of modern jurisprudence."[1]

Iqbal's last years were darkened by prolonged ill-health. He was also fated to witness some unpleasant developments in the provinces, where Congress came into power in 1937. Even more depressing was the sight of some young Muslims—and many *ulama*—trying to come to "an unmanly compromise" with the opposite party. Iqbal's faith, however, never faltered. In the words of Jinnah—never given to cheap or undeserved praise—'he stood like a rock' in the darkest days. He was confident that the Muslims, who had weathered many a storm would overcome this, and urged that there should be no lowering of the flag. He stood firmly by the Muslim League, and was one of those who criticised the half-hearted allegiance of the Muslim Unionists to the Muslim League, and felt that if the League was to become a party of the masses it would have to fight the Unionist landed aristocracy.

1. *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp. 175-76.

Iqbal did not live to see the realisation of his dream of the Muslim state. He died on April 21, 1938—less than ten years before the establishment of Pakistan—but when the final show-down came in the key province of the Punjab, foremost amongst those who pulled down the Unionist edifice, and paved the way for Pakistan, were those young men—and women—who had drunk deeply at the fountain of Iqbal's poetry. The pen was indeed mightier than the sword.

CHAPTER 12

THE AGA KHAN

(1875—1958)

A POLITICAL leader, who in solid, fruitful achievements ranks only below Syed Ahmed Khan, Quaid-i-Azam and perhaps Mohsin-ul-Mulk, but with whom the present generation is only dimly acquainted was His Highness Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah, more generally known as the Aga Khan (1875-1958). His ill-health made permanent stay in the sub-continent impossible and his aristocratic temperament was such that he wanted the palm without the dust. He appeared on the scene only at crucial moments and normally remained in the background, but for thirty long years, *i.e.*, from 1904 till 1934 he dominated the national scene and overshadowed other great figures.

The Aga Khan who was the hereditary head of the Ismaili Khojas was born at Karachi on November 2, 1875. When his father died he was only 10, but under the guidance of a wise mother he received liberal education, not only in Arabic and Persian literature and history but also in English and modern subjects. At first, his active work was confined mainly to the welfare of his followers, but Mohsin-ul-Mulk who used to spend the summer months at Bombay soon attracted him to a wider national field. He was the Chairman of the Reception Committee for the All-India Muslim Educational Conference which met at Bombay in 1903. He was, next, selected to preside over the important session of All-India Muslim Educational Conference, which met at Delhi in 1904, immediately after the Durbar held by Lord Curzon. The Conference was of special importance, as it was attended by a number of celebrities who had come to attend the Durbar. The Aga Khan read a thoughtful and statesmanlike address, and in particular urged the setting up of a Central Muslim University at Aligarh. On October 1, 1906, he headed



(p. 194) H.H. THE AGA KHAN

the historic Simla Deputation which successfully presented Muslim demands before Lord Minto. After this, the Aga Khan and Mohsin-ul-Mulk corresponded on the need for having a political organization which could carry on the work of the Deputation and next year, on the basis of a scheme circulated by Nawab Salim Ullah Khan of Dacca, it was decided to organize All-India Muslim League. When the first formal session of the League met at Karachi the Aga Khan was elected its permanent President and continued to hold this office till he resigned in 1913, following the shift in Muslim politics. In 1911 he toured all over the country with Maulana Shaukat Ali on his side as his honorary Political Secretary, to raise funds for the Aligarh University and was able to collect all the money that was required.

The shift in Muslim politics, growing pre-occupation of Indian Muslims with the affairs of Turkey and the powerful Khilafat movement brought new leadership to the fore, but the Aga Khan's help was available for all good causes. Essentially a moderate and constructive statesman, he did not share the policy and the programme of the popular Khilafat leadership, but he continued to urge, in his own way, the point of view of Muslim India and render such services to the Turkish cause as were possible. He and Syed Amir Ali met influential British leaders, explained the Turkish case in the columns of the British press and provided the channels through which financial assistance was sent from India for the relief of Turkish sufferers of Smyrna and elsewhere. They, however, brought upon themselves the wrath of the Turkish Government when Kamal Ataturk abolished the Caliphate. On 24 November, 1923, the two leaders addressed the Turkish Government giving the point of view of the Indian Muslims on the steps taken by Turkey. They posted their letter in London, and according to Syed Amir Ali's subsequent account, allowed nearly a week to pass before forwarding copies of their communication to the Constantinople press. Nevertheless, owing to some accident of communications, the text reached Constantinople before it was delivered in Ankara. Three papers published it, and the authorities in Ankara came to know of the

communication, first from its publication in the press. As there was considerable opposition to the abolition of Caliphate within Turkey, Ataturk's Government reacted violently to the action of Aga Khan and Amir Ali. Ismat Pasha Inonu publicly criticised their action and pointed out that they were Shias and could not be the spokesmen of the Sunni Muslims of India.

While the mystery of delay in receipt of the communication by the authorities at Ankara was never solved, this unfortunate episode highlights a happy development in the affairs of Muslim India. The Aga Khan and Amir Ali were both Shias but in modern Muslim India the sectarian differences had ceased to count in political matters. Situation had changed completely from the eighteenth century when Shia-Sunni differences had all but destroyed Muslim solidarity. The climax was to come during the Pakistan movement, when Muhammad Ali Jinnah, himself a Shia, worked hard to bring into existence a state in which Sunni Muslims were bound to be in an overwhelming majority.

The Aga Khan and Amir Ali had received a sharp rebuff from the Turkish authorities but they did not allow this to interfere with their efforts in the cause of Turkey. In particular, the Aga Khan seems to have played an important role at a crucial moment. Turkish troubles were largely due to the policy of the British premier Lloyd George who headed the Coalition Government of Liberals and Conservatives. But for his exit from the office following the break-up of the Coalition, it is certain that Britain would have intervened in favour of Greeks to whose support Lloyd George was personally committed and Ataturk would not have been able to consolidate his gains. Authoritative evidence is available to show that the Aga Khan personally contributed to these developments. Beaverbrook, the influential press lord of Great Britian, has given details of the events preceding the withdrawal of Conservative support to Lloyd George's government. In his *Politicians and the Press* he refers to his visit to Deavulle in August 1922 and adds, "At the Royal Hotel there, His Highness Prince Aga Khan discussed with me the disastrous character of the relations of the

British Government with the *de facto* Turkish Government. I decided to go to Angora and discover what the real intentions and terms of the new Turkish Government were. I had made arrangements, through the medium of Prince Aga Khan for a meeting with Mustafa Kamal."[1] Lord Beaverbrook proceeded to Constantinople after discussing matters with the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill and Lord Birkenhead and on his return "tried the power of private persuasion in the interests of Anglo-Turkish peace." He had long interviews with Lloyd George, Lord Birkenhead[2] and Winston Churchill, who then completely dominated the counsels of the Coalition Ministry. He urged that "they should at all costs abate the rigour of their anti-Turkish attitudes and that they would not find it difficult to come to an honourable arrangement with the Turkish Government."[3] When three or four days' discussion proved unavailing, Beaverbrook "went to Bonor Law in his retirement and said to him, 'These men mean war.' As it turned out, this sentence epitomising a situation was the signal for the overthrow of the Coalition Government."[4] Bonor Law wrote to the press declaring that Britian could not act as "the policeman of the world alone" and criticised the policy which the Coalition Government was following. His letter was the "death-knell of the Coalition Ministry" and the famous party meeting of the Conservatives which was held at the Carlton Club on 19 October, 1922 decided to withdraw support from Lloyd George's government, and the Coalition collapsed. Next month, the Conservatives came to power under Bonor Law and a new policy was adopted under which agreement with the new Turkish leaders became possible.

Another distinguished journalist gives yet another instance of the manner in which Aga Khan used his contacts in high

1. Beaverbrook, *Politicians and the Press*, p. 48.
2. The biographer of Lloyd George records that Birkenhead explained to Beaverbrook that in the matter of Chanak, the British Government were fighting the "battle of Christianity" (*vide* Frank Owen : *Tempestuous Journey—Life and Times of Lloyd George*, p. 653.)
3. Beaverbrook, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
4. *Ibid.*

places to further Turkey's interests. Those who are acquainted with the developments during the viceroyalty of Lord Reading will recall the occasion when the Government of India urged the British Government to revise the Treaty of Sevres on lines favourable to Turkey. During the last days of February 1922, Lord Reading's government sent an important despatch to London, urging "that the allies should evacuate Constantinople, giving back to the Sultan his former suzerainty over the Holy Places, and also restore Thrace and Smyrna to Turkey."[1] Government of India asked for permission to publish this despatch. The permission was granted by Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, and the telegram was duly published. Curzon, the Foreign Secretary, strongly objected to this and under Lloyd George's insistence Montagu had to resign from the British Cabinet and go into political wilderness. Sir Stanley Reed, the influential editor of *The Times of India*, has thrown light on the origin of this famous despatch. In his memoirs entitled *The India I Knew—1897-1947*, he writes, "What was the origin of that despatch? In a sense it was due to the inspiration of His Highness the Aga Khan. In one of our many talks on the political situation in India, generally at breakfast in the Aga's pleasant bungalow in Bombay, facing the westering sea, he stressed the importance of action which would allay the just resentment of seventy millions of Moslems in India at the draft treaty with the Turks."[2] Reed discussed the question with Reading and Lloyd, the Governor of Bombay, and the despatch of which the original draft was prepared by Lloyd, and which was endorsed by Government of India, was sent to London.

During the Khilafat movement the Aga Khan was not in the centre of the picture but when following the abolition of Khilafat by Turkey the movement collapsed and Indian Muslims had to pay more attention to less romantic but ultimately more rewarding situation nearer home, they again turned to him. In the middle of the twenties All-India Muslim League had split into

1. Frank Owen, *op. cit.*, pp. 603-4.
2. Reed, S., *The India I Knew—1897-1947*, pp. 187-89.

two sections—one headed by Sir Muhammad Shafi and the other by Muhammad Ali Jinnah—on the question of the co-operation with the Simon Commission. There were numerous other bodies like the Khilafat Conference and Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind claiming to speak on behalf of Indian Muslims. Muslim India was so sadly divided that only an All-Parties Muslim Conference could give them cohesion and so a representative gathering was held at Delhi on the first day of 1929. For this representative gathering nobody more capable of commanding the confidence of different groups than Aga Khan could be thought of, and he was asked to preside over its deliberations. Recounting the events of first January 1929, Coatman says, "That day His Highness the Aga Khan presided over the most representative gathering of Moslems which has ever assembled during the rule of the British in India."[1] The Conference included not only Muslim League leaders of both the sections but also Khilafat leaders like Maulana Shaukat Ali and representatives of Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind, and it consolidated the Muslim demands.

The Aga Khan's most signal service was, however, during the Round Table Conference of which different sessions were held in London from 1931 to 1933. The ostensible object of the Conference was to consider the recommendations of the Simon Commission, but it hammered out proposals which were to form basis of the next political advance in succession to Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. At this crucial Conference the Aga Khan was in his own element. Not only was he the leader of the Muslim group, but was also elected leader of the entire Indian Delegation. He placed his cards remarkably well, and with his suavity of manners and tact, and general attitude of helpfulness kept the Muslim team solidly together, in visible contrast to the many and discordant voices, which spoke from the other camp. He tried to come to an understanding with Mahatma Gandhi on the Hindu-Muslim question, but when these talks proved unfruitful, he initiated a Minorities Pact, by which all sections of the Indian political life, except the caste Hindus, joined hands with

1. Coatman, J., *Years of Destiny, 1926-32*, p. 233

the Muslims. This facilitated the task of the British Premier in giving his Communal Award (1933) which notwithstanding its many deficienceis improved the Muslim position in majority areas and was a milestone on the road to Pakistan. As A. K. Majumdar says, "In 1906, the Aga Khan presented his demands on behalf of the Muslims and Minto accepted ; quarter of a century later Aga Khan again presented a demand and the Communal Award was the result."[1]

The activities at the Round Table Conference marked the climax of the Aga Khan's political career. Thereafter, the centre of gravity shifted to the subcontinent. The Aga Khan's success at the Round Table Conference was not due to any great forensic ability—as a matter of fact, he generally avoided public speaches—but to his great wisdom, personal influence and the large-hearted manner in which he helped all who turned to him. The extraordinary reputation for sagacity which he enjoyed may be judged by the fact that when King Edward the VIII was faced with the great crisis of his life and saw a grim choice staring him in the face, he turned for advice to the Aga Khan, as Duchess of Windsor has indicated in her memoirs, entitled *Heart has its Reasons.* Of course, this issue was one in which even the Aga Khan could not help but the mere fact of the British sovereign turning to him for advice gives an indication of the reputation and the influence he enjoyed in the highest British circles.

During the last decade of the British Rule, a grim struggle started, in which the Aga Khan sitting thousands of miles away and with essentially a moderate and cosmopolitan outlook, was not well-equipped to help. He, however, continued his interest in the affairs of the Muslims of the subcontinent and his Diamond Jubilee was celebrated in Pakistan. On this occasion, as always, he spoke with mature wisdom and good sense, but perhaps the most important speech of his later years was made on 8 February, 1950, before the members of Pakistan Institute of International Affairs at Karachi. He was making his remarks before

1. Majumdar, A. K., *Advent of Independence*, p. 128.

tne ideological controversy became pronounced in Pakistan. In any case, with his brief occasional visits to the new state, he could not be expected to be very intimately acquainted with the conditions here, but he rightly placed his finger on what is the most crucial problem of the modern Muslim world. Speaking on "The Future of Muslim States", he said:

"And finally, the fact must be faced that there is either an open or hidden clash between the conservative and the progressive elements in Muslim society. In Turkey this clash has led to a secular State. In Egypt it is there between the Ikhwan and and the governing classes. It threatens itself in the opposition between the so-called Darul-Islam and the responsible Government in Indonesia. Thank God, it is not so in Pakistan. But unless a healthy middle way such as existed in the first century is found, the ship may be on the rocks again. Pious Muslim thinkers who face realities in Egypt, North Africa and Iran know about it. I hope and pray that it may be the destiny of Pakistan whose creator Quaid-i-Azam was essentially a modern man, to bring about this spiritual and intellectual unity. Here and now and by not only its example but its mediation and influence, prevent it ever again from leading to final break as it did in Turkey, in any other Muslim State and Society."[1]

The Aga Khan passed away in 1962, and in accordance with his wishes this citizen of the world was buried in Egypt. According to his will, his son Prince Ali Khan was passed over, and his grandson who had been educated at Harvard University, succeeded him.

1. *Message of H.R.H. Prince Aga Khan to Nation of Pakistan and World of Islam*, edited by Sultan Nazerali, p. 11.

CHAPTER 13

EMERGENCE OF THE MUSLIM MAJORITY PROVINCES

IT has been said, with considerable justice, that Muslims from the provinces where they were in a minority, took the lead in the struggle which ended in the establishment of Pakistan. This was particularly true of the response to the call of Muslim League in the elections of 1936, which marked the beginning of the final phase of the struggle. It is also true of the basic struggle of the Indian Muslims for securing an honourable place in the Indian subcontinent. When this struggle started, some time after the Revolt of 1857, Muslims in the minority areas—particularly in U.P., Bihar and at Delhi, the old Muslim capital—were ahead of Muslims in other areas, and they took up the cause of the community, irrespective of what would be the ultimate consequences of the struggle. With the introduction of the representative institutions in the early part of the twentieth century, a situation arose in which the interests of Muslims in majority areas (when they stood to gain by the fullest extension of the representative principle on the basis of population) seemed to come in conflict with the requirements of the Muslims in the minority areas. The Muslim leaders tried —as at the time of the Lucknow Pact—to reconcile these conflicting claims, but basically it is true that the lead in the community's revival was taken by the provinces where the Muslims were in a minority. This, however, does not mean that Pakistan could have come into being without the Muslims in the majority provinces playing their proper role or that even the goal of an autonomous Muslim state formed by amalgamation of Muslim majority areas could have been decided upon without Muslims becoming politically dominant in the areas in which they were in a majority.

Pakistan came into being, under the Mountbatten Plan of

3rd June, 1947, on the basis of territorial self-determination. In order to know the process which paved the way for Pakistan by consolidation of the Muslim position in the provinces whose votes were ultimately decisive, as also to understand the background of the areas which now constitute Pakistan, it would be useful to deal somewhat fully with the development in these areas.

THE PUNJAB

The first majority province in which Muslims were able to make themselves heard was the Punjab. The reasons for this were simple. Till the Census of 1921 revealed another rapid increase in the Muslim population of Bengal, the Punjab had the largest percentage of Muslims, *viz.*, 54.8% against 52.8% of Bengal. Besides, the Muslims in the Punjab had not been subjected to the same systematic grinding, which had been the fate of the Bengali Muslims since the battle of Plassey. Muslims, here, still counted in the life of the province. Although no seats were reserved for them under Minto-Morley Reforms, they were able to secure 25% seats, while Muslim share of elected seats in Bengal was only 10.4%. The position of both provinces improved under the Lucknow Pact, but Muslims in the Punjab got 50% of the elected seats, while in Bengal, their share was only 40%.

When the British conquered the Punjab from the Sikhs in 1848, it also included the districts, which were later formed into the North-West Frontier Province and from 1858 to 1911 included Delhi. The Sikh rule was marked by anarchy and maladministration. Muslims, however, maintained their position in the educational sphere,[1] as the Sikhs retained Persian as the court language.

1. This seems to have been a source of some anxiety to the early British administrators. Captain Fuller, the Director of Public Instruction, wrote in the Education Report for 1860-61, "The preponderance of Muslims among teachers, who are being trained in these institutions, is very apparent, there being 334 of them to 111 of the Hindus and 6 of other castes. There seems no way of equalising the proportion very readily. Except in the Ambala circle, vernacular education is in the hands of the Muslims, and we cannot supersede them, so long as they retain their

The British rule in the Punjab was also marked by autocracy of the "non-regulated" provinces, which was bemoaned by Ghalib and Syed Ahmed Khan. In fact, Hali says[1] that Syed Ahmed Khan gave up his residence in Delhi and selected Aligarh for his life-work, because he did not wish to be under the "despotic" sway of the Punjab Government. He made this clear to Sir Donald McLeod, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab in 1866, and expressed the same sentiments in 1869 to Fitzpatrick, who had been Deputy Commissioner of Delhi, and later became Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab. It may be interesting to quote from the reminiscences of a contemporary journalist:

"In the last decade of the last century official arrogance and high-handedness were more noticeable in the Punjab than anywhere else, but people rarely complained of ill-treatment. There was a Deputy Commissioner, a man named Silcock, who considered himself a lineal descendant and representative of the Great Moghul. His standing orders were that any one passing in front of his house or office on horseback should alight and lead his horse on foot until those imperial precincts were passed, and these orders were always enforced. Any one carrying an open umbrella had to put it down, because the umbrella was an imperial emblem. Passers by ignorant of this ukase had their umbrellas confiscated. These were collected in the Government *toshakhana* and afterwards sold by auction. So spiritless were the people that no complaints were heard and no claim was made for umbrellas forcibly seized. The practice ceased only after its exposure in the *Tribune*.

"On the roads I noticed Indian pedestrians leaving the entire width of the road to Europeans and making themselves as small as possible. An Indian Divisional Judge, who had himself served

---

popularity. District officers, however, might prepare the way for a gradual change by encouraging more Hindus to qualify as teachers, and appointing them to schools where residents are not too strongly prejudiced in favour of Muslim instructors." (Quoted by Ram Gopal, *op. cit.*, pp. 42-43).

1. Altaf Hussain Hali, *Hayat-i-Jawaid*, pp. 445-46.

in the Army, had his kit pitched out of a first-class railway compartment by a European passenger and he meekly went to a second-class compartment."[1]

Something of this autocracy continued till the end of the British rule, but the province gained under its new rulers, who established the rule of law and later, brought vast new areas under cultivation, through large-scale canal irrigation. The Victorian policy of the laissez faire and the introduction of a new civil law in an area where different practices prevailed, resulted, however, in certain economic difficulties for the rural classes, whose agricultural lands, hitherto immune from attachment and sale, began to be sold under the strict British Law, to the moneylenders. Much damage was done, before some conscientious British administrators, amongst whom Thorburn, the author of the *Mussalmans and the Money-lenders*, was most prominent, realized the danger and in 1900 the Government enacted the Land Alienation Act, banning transfer of agricultural lands to non-agriculturists.

Muslims of the Punjab, also, benefited greatly from the Aligarh Movement. They responded enthusiastically to the call of Syed Ahmed, and among his close collaborators were men like Sardar Muhammad Hayat Khan (father of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan), Khan Bahadur Barkat Ali (after whom Barkat Ali Islamia Hall of Lahore is named), and Khalifa Muhammad Hasan, Chief Minister of Patiala. They not only supported the activities at Aligarh but also tried to organize Muslims in the Punjab. Sardar Muhammad Hayat Khan (d. 1901), who presided over three successive sessions of All-India Muslim Educational Conference (1888, 1889, 1890), was the Life-President of Anjuman-i-Islamia of Lahore while K. B. Barkat Ali was its General Secretary. The Anjuman-i-Islamia collaborated with Aligarh leadership, and made arrangements for the session of Muslim Educational Conference held at Lahore in 1888, but the organization which easily surpassed it not only in services to the

1. Nagendranath Gupta, *Reflections and Reminiscences*, p. 177.

cause of modern education but brought about a general awakening among the Muslims of the Punjab was Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam. The preliminary meeting of the Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam or rather "The Anjuman," as it came to be called, was held in March 1884. It was formally inaugurated on September 22, 1884 when Khalifa Hamid-ud-Din, a scion of an old scholarly family of Lahore and grandfather of Khalifa Shuja-ud-Din, later Speaker of West Pakistan Legislative Assembly and for long President of the Anjuman, was elected as its President, his pupil, Maulvi Ghulam Ullah Qasuri (then Revenue Minister, Faridkot State) as Secretary, Munshi Chiragh Din and Munshi Pir Bakhsh as Joint Secretaries and Munshi Abdur Rahim as Treasurer. Its objects included promotion of "religious and general education of Muslims boys and girls," propagation and defence of Islam, and social service amongst Muslims. It opened a number of schools, and in 1892 laid the foundation of a college by opening a first year class of 11 students. Its present activities include maintenance of two colleges for boys, one college for girls, orphanages for boys and girls and many other beneficent institutions. Of great importance in the history of the province have been its annual sessions, which were addressed by topmost national leaders, and where Iqbal first recited some of his major poems.

The Land Alienation Act had ensured that in the Punjab the Muslims like other agriculturists would not become landless agricultural labourers, as had happened in Bengal and elsewhere, and thanks to the efforts of certain enlightened Muslim leaders the community began to have a certain share of fruits of modern knowledge and orderly government. Owing to the incorporation of Delhi within Punjab after the revolt of 1857, a number of distinguished scholars—like Muhammad Hussain Azad, who lies buried in a corner of Lahore, Altaf Hussain Hali and Nazir Ahmed, who spent considerable time in the new province—and many administrators belonging to the old families of the Muslim capital spread themselves in different parts of the Punjab and helped the cause of Muslims' regeneration. Foreign educationists also helped, particularly Col. Holroyd, the Director of Public

Instruction, whose name is associated with those of Hali and Azad in the rise of the new school of "Natural Poetry," in which Lahore took the lead, and Dr. Leitner, for long Principal of the Oriental College and a sympathetic historian of the indigenous education in the Punjab. The new literary life and linguistic transformation owed most to Azad (1830-1911). Not only did that man of genius write masterpieces which are the ornament of Urdu literature and organize symposiums, which ushered a new era in the history of Urdu poetry, but also prepared new Urdu primers and text-books for infants and adults, which remained current for three-quarters of a century, and laid a firm basis for the study and mastery of Urdu language. Originally from Delhi, he made Lahore his home, and it is due to him more than to any other single individual that Urdu took root in the Punjab and Lahore became the cultural heir of Delhi.

With the emergence of Muslims from newly established colleges, signs of a new life became visible. The foundation of the Urdu magazine, *Makhzan*, in 1901 by Sheikh (later Sir) Abdul Qadir, whose *New School of Urdu Literature* had appeared three years earlier, gave expression to this new literary and cultural life. *Makhzan* occupies a unique place in the history of modern Urdu Literature. Perhaps never before or after, was in Urdu a literary magazine which maintained such excellence over such a long period and appealed to all classes of people. It mirrored the qualities of its editor—sound literary taste, perfect mastery over Urdu, catholicity of outlook and good sense—but its success was also due to the *milieu*, which it represented. It came at a time when Urdu prose had become an adequate vehicle of expression and the grip of old conventions which cramped the style of writers had loosened, but literary craftsmanship was still taken seriously. Abdul Qadir lived on to play many prominent roles—of High Court Judge, Education Minister, Member of India Council—but he is primarily remembered as the editor of *Makhzan*.

Ordinary journalism also had a vigorous start in the new province, and in this too Sheikh Abdul Qadir made his contribu-

tion. In 1895 he joined the weekly *Observer*, of which he later became the chief editor. The *Observer* gave expression in English to the Muslim point of view in politics, just as *Paisa Akhbar*, *Vatan* and *Vakil* were representing it in Urdu. In course of time *Zamindar* surpassed all these in influence and popularity, under the editorship of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, whose role in journalism and politics was second only to that of Ali Brothers and Abul Kalam Azad during the Khilafat movement.

In political field, the era of Syed Ahmed's early contemporaries was coming to an end, but young Muslim barristers were now filling the void. In the historic deputation, which successfully urged before Lord Minto the Muslim case for separate electorates, were two such young men—Mian Shah Din and Mian Muhammad Shafi. Mian Shah Din (1868-1918) impressed Syed Ahmed so much by the able paper which he read on "The Education of Mussalmans in the Punjab" at the Muslim Educational Conference of 1893, that he was selected, at the age of 26, to preside over the next session of the Conference. When the first Provincial Muslim League was formed in the Punjab, he was elected its President, but soon had to resign on his appointment as the Judge of the Punjab Chief Court. His early death cut short a career of great brilliance and usefulness. His cousin Mian (Sir) Muhammad Shafi who was the General Secretary of the Provincial League, presided over the annual session of All-India Muslim League in 1913. He was prominent at the bar and in the legislature, and in 1919 became a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. The fact that he was taken away from the Punjab at a time when politics was becoming fruitful in the provincial sphere, in a way, reduced his usefulness. When he retired after completing his term, he again became active in Muslim politics, and played an important role when the Simon Commission visited India, and later at the first Round Table Conference.

Muslims in the Punjab did not suffer so badly as Muslims in other majority areas, but even then, their position was not very



(p. 209) MIAN SIR FAZL-I-HUSSAIN

happy. With all the special efforts of their new leaders, the Muslims were far behind the sister community in modern education, and all the so-called "professions" were crowded by the Hindus. The latter were receiving a very disproportionate share of the state service and, of course, in commerce and industry, in which Muslims had never interested themselves, the Hindus had a virtual monopoly. With their strong economic position and by taking full advantage of the modern education the Hindus had begun to dominate even the political life of the province. In the early nineteenth century political activity was largely confined to the practising lawyers, and as they were mainly the Hindus, political influence had also passed on to them.

MIAN FAZL-I-HUSSAIN
(1877-1936)

The man who brought about a complete change of the political scene was Mian Fazl-i-Hussain. He belonged to an old Muslim Rajput family, which was one of the few Muslim families to attain any distinction under the Sikhs. With the British occupation of the Punjab the family lost its original importance and Fazl-i-Hussain's father had to accept a petty job under the British. By dint of ability and hard work he, however, rose to be a District Judge, and was able to send his son to Cambridge for higher education. Fazl-i-Hussain, who was born in 1877 and was a classfellow of Iqbal and a contemporary of Sheikh Abdul Qadir at Government College, Lahore, failed to qualify for the Indian Civil Service, but took a degree at Cambridge and returned as a Barrister. He started practice at Sialkot in 1901, and four years later moved to the provincial capital. Even while at Sialkot he used to contribute to the *Observer* and *Makhzan*, but his activities in political and educational fields greatly increased when he moved to Lahore. In particular, he began to take an active interest in the affairs of the Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam. He was elected a member of its Managing Committee in 1905 and next year became Secretary of the College Committee, which office he continued to hold till his appointment as Education Minister of the Punjab in 1921. As Secretary of the

College Committee not only had Fazl-i-Hussain to build up Islamia College Lahore in its initial stages, but in 1920 had to face the determined onslaught on the College from Khilafat and Congress leaders who wanted the institution to give up its normal line of work and become a part of Gandhian scheme of national education.

In politics Fazl-i-Hussain interested himself in the provincial branch of the Muslim League, but here he came in clash with the more moderate Mian Muhammad Shafi, who was some ten years his senior. Both of them had attended the first session of the All-India Muslim League, held at Karachi in December 1907. Thereafter they organized rival provincial leagues. "The second sitting of the Aligarh meeting (of the All-India Muslim League held on March 18/19, 1903) dealt with the problem of squaring up the differences between the two provincial leagues in the Punjab. The whole of the Muslim community was anxious on this score. Mian Muhammad Shafi presented the names of 24 members and Mian Fazl-i-Hussain of 18 to constitute the executive of the Punjab Provincial League. After long discussions, it was declared that both of them should confer together and arrive at a unanimous decision to submit the names of 24 members, which was actually done." Fazl-i-Hussain's supporters included many progressive and talented young men like "Pir Taj-ud-Din, Malik Barkat Ali, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, Khalifa Shuja-ud-Din, Chaudhri Shahab-ud-Din, and Ghulam Bhik Nairang," but Mian Muhammad Shafi retained the control of the Provincial Muslim League till 1916, and Mian Fazl-i-Hussain did not actively participate in its affairs. He did not formally sever his relations with the Muslim League, but ceased to take an active interest in politics, and when in 1915 he actively turned to the political field, it was in the Indian National Congress with which Jinnah was also closely associated at this time. With the exception of Lala Lajpat Rai, who had been externed from India, Fazl-i-Hussain became the most influential Congress leader in the Punjab. His activities and independent views, however, made him unpopular with Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the powerful Governor of the province. Mian Sahib was the Secretary of the Provincial Congress

Committee, when serious trouble started in the Punjab, leading to declaration of Martial Law and adoption of repressive measures associated with Sir Michael O'Dwyer's regime. On 16 April, 1919, when Fazl-i-Hussain had gone to Simla to persuade the Central Government to intervene in the Punjab, orders for his arrest were issued, but were withdrawn at the intervention of the Government of India.

Fazl-i-Hussain continued to associate with the Indian Congress, but when that body decided on a policy of Non-Co-operation and boycott of Councils, set up under Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme, he resigned. He offered himself for election to the Provincial Legislative Council and was duly elected.

Sir Michael O'Dwyer was succeeded as Governor by Sir Edward Maclagan, a cultured and liberal administrator. By this time Mian Shah Din had passed away (1917) and in 1919 Mian Muhammad Shafi had joined the Viceroy's Executive Council. Fazl-i-Hussain was now the most prominent Muslim leader in the province and became Minister for Education in 1921, continuing to hold this portfolio till 1926.

Fazl-i-Hussain's tenure of office as Education Minister marks an epoch, in the annals not only of the educational, but also of the political life of the Punjab. In the point of sheer departmental efficiency and spread of education in the province, Fazl-i-Hussain's ministry surpassed all others in the subcontinent. Punjab, which had been educationally one of the most backward provinces came close to the top. "While before the Reforms the percentage of the total population in the Punjab receiving instruction in all institutions had been 2.42 per cent, after six years under the system, it was 6.71 per cent."[1] This was all the more remarkable as the increase in literacy had been obtained mainly by extension of education in the backward areas and amongst classes educationally backward. Muslims greatly benefited by this. During the first two years of Fazl-i-Hussain's regime, "the Muslims in all

1. Azim Hussain, *Fazl-i-Hussain, A Political Biography*, p. 132.

institutions increased by 42.3 per cent while the increase amongst Hindus was barely 19.6 per cent."[1] This expansion was secured largely by a vigorous drive, by offering a number of free studentships and scholarships to backward communities, including Muslims, and by opening a large number of government educational institutions in educationally backward areas. The expansion was not only at the school level. In the sphere of higher education Fazl-i-Hussain launched a new experiment by opening Intermediate colleges all over the province. Parents who could not afford to or did not want to send their children to Lahore, were able to get them preliminary college education nearer home. Thus the way to higher education was paved.

The entire province benefited by the vigorous drive launched under Fazl-i-Hussain, but Muslims received special attention. Hitherto, very few—not more than 5 to 10%—Muslims were able to gain admission to the prestigious institutions like Medical College and Government College of Lahore. Fazl-i-Hussain ordered reservation of seats for them in these institutions in proportion to their representation under the Lucknow Pact (*viz.*, 40%). This meant that the Muslim students were able to receive higher education in the best educational institutions, and by competing with Hindu fellow-students, their intellectual and mental standards improved. Already Fazl-i-Hussain had placed the Muslim community under a heavy debt by devoting a lifetime to their only institution for higher education—Islamia College, Lahore. Now he was able to perform these services on a much vaster scale and at a higher level. The principle of communal reservation of seats was extended to newly opened Intermediate Colleges, and in fact, to all government institutions for higher education. With nearly half their students from amongst Muslims and increased appointment of Muslim staff, these institutions virtually became miniature Islamia Colleges. The effect this had on spread of higher education amongst Muslims of the province and, in fact, on a general intellectual renaissance amongst them may be easily imagined. The steep rise in educational standards showed itself

1. Azim Hussain, *Fazl-i-Hussain, A Political Biography*, p. 136.

not only in developments within the province, but even in the competitive examinations for All-India Services, next to Muslims from U.P., which was always the centre of Muslim culture and education, those from the Punjab were most successful. Mian Fazl-i-Hussain also adopted the policy of giving representation on these lines to Muslims seeking positions in the departments under him, subject to their having adequate qualifications. These measures were bitterly criticised by the Hindu press and even disliked by some British administrators but Fazl-i-Hussain persisted in them, and such was his hold over the members of the Provincial legislature that he successfully carried out his policy. Largely under his influence the Punjab Government accepted the principle of laying down Muslim quota in services, and in course of time this was adopted in other provinces and ultimately by the Government of India.

These measures improved the position of Muslims in administrative and educational spheres, and gave them a new sense of confidence. Besides, Fazl-i-Hussain took steps in the political field which made the Muslims, particularly from the rural areas, dominant in the affairs of the province. The basis for this had been laid under the Lucknow Pact, under which Muslims had been given 50 per cent of the elected seats. Fazl-i-Hussain took full advantage of the position and even improved upon it. He organized a party which was originally called the Rural Party and later designated National Unionist or more generally the Unionist Party, by which the large majority of Muslim members and a few Non-Muslims from rural areas, could constitute a clear majority amongst elected members and thus dominate the Legislative Council.

The impact which Fazl-i-Hussain made on the political life of the Punjab was not only due to new, imaginative schemes or even the political organization which gave him virtual control of the provincial legislature, but also to the bold, effective manner in which he carried out his policies and programmes. Coatman, an officer of the Imperial Police and later Director of Information, Government of India, wrote about him in 1932, "Sir Fazl-i-Hussain

belongs to a family which was famous in the days of Moghuls, and he himself always carries with him some air of those splendid days. He is a man of inflexible will and immutable purpose, with a mind like diamond which can cut its way through anything." This was a rare thing amongst those who co-operated with the Government in that era, particularly in the Punjab where British bureaucracy was well-entrenched and ministers were favoured for their pliability. Sir Fazl-i-Hussain changed this. Not only did he stoutly resist all onslaughts from the Hindu press and the legislators, but had a show-down with some senior British officers, and won the day. Col. Sutherland, the Principal of Medical College, objected to the reservation of seats for Muslims and had to step down as a professor. In 1929 Fazl-i-Hussain, as Revenue Member, obtained the Governor's consent to hold a Durbar at Gujranwala to make certain announcements and asked Kenneway, the Commissioner of Lahore, to arrange the Durbar and attend. The British Commissioner was unwilling to attend a Durbar where he would have to rank lower than an Indian. The matter went up to the Governor, and Kenneway had to proceed on leave preparatory to premature retirement.

These and other incidents,—some true, some half-true, some apocryphal—built up the Fazl-i-Hussain legend. They did more. Hitherto the economic scene was dominated by the Hindu money-lender and the political scene by the Hindu lawyer. The University was controlled by the D.A.V. College. Now it looked as if the political power had passed to the Muslims, and that power could be used to redress balances in other spheres. Muslims got a new self-confidence, while the Hindus were unnerved. When the determined attempts of the *Tribune*, Professor Gulshan Rai and the Hindu leaders to dislodge Fazl-i-Hussain failed, they began to think of other measures. In desperation Lala Lajpat Rai wrote a series of articles openly advocating that the Punjab should be divided into Eastern and Western Zones. He realized that the battle had been lost and wanted to salvage as much from the wreck as possible!

In spite of Fazl-i-Hussain's determined efforts to provide

for Muslims in various spheres in accordance with their agreed share at Lucknow, he was free from individual favouritism and was exceedingly careful and correct in all that he did. Still many British officers did not like his ways and the position he had built up for himself. Sir Malcolm Hailey, another strong man, set about undermining his position. Mian Sahib's appointment as Revenue Member in 1926 was ostensibly a promotion, but by removing him from the sphere of the Transferred Departments where he influenced other ministries besides his own, in reality, his wings had been clipped.

In 1930, he was transferred to Delhi as Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. During his tenure an important Government Resolution laying down the share of Muslims in the services under the Government of India was issued. Fazl-i-Hussain also greatly facilitated the Aga Khan's task at the Round Table Conference by judicious advice on the selection of Muslim delegates and by briefing them properly. Lord Willingdon thought very highly of him. In fact (speaking at a time before Quaid-i-Azam had entered the most fruitful period of his career), he is reported to have said that in his opinion only two leaders of Indian Muslims had rendered solid, lasting service to the community and they were Sir Syed and Mian Fazl-i-Hussain.[1]

Fazl-i-Hussain made a mark as Executive Councillor, but he was not particularly happy at Delhi and Simla. His strength lay in a mastery of detail, cool calculation and tenacity of purpose, and the smaller sphere of a province where he knew everybody, suited him better. Besides, his health was never very good and in 1932 he suffered a particularly serious breakdown. His recovery was only partial, and although he continued his activities till the end, he was a very sick man—he even thought of committing suicide at one stage—and there is considerable controversy about the policies and activities of his last years. Fazl-i-Hussain returned to the Punjab on April 1, 1935. Originally he intended to lead a retired life and apart from giving occasional legal opinion,

1. Salik, Abdul Majid, *Sarguzasht* (Urdu), p. 361.

at his residence, wished to spend his "time in prayer."[1] These wishes were, however, of no avail. Once he was in Lahore, his friends and admirers pressed him to return to politics and before long he was in the thick of affairs. He set to work with his usual thoroughness, and reorganized the Unionist Party, in readiness for the coming elections. His exclusive preoccupation, however, with the provincial requirements brought him in conflict with the Quaid-i-Azam. His ability and services to the Muslims were known to the Quaid, for whom he had organized a successful session of the League at Lahore in 1924, when the Khilafat movement had driven the League out of the public view and no annual session had been held for years. Quaid-i-Azam was now reorganizing the Muslim League and on January 5, 1936, wrote to Fazl-i-Hussain, inviting him to preside over the annual session of the League. Quaid's letter is of some historic interest as containing his views about Fazl-i-Hussain, six months and four days before the latter's death. He wrote:

"At the meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League, it was the unanimous wish of everyone that you should be asked to preside over the next session of the League. As soon I suggested your name, it was cordially welcomed. I, along with many others, feel that at this moment no one can give a better lead to the Mussalmans of India than yourself. Of course, it will be a great honour to the League to have you to preside over our deliberations and I am confident that you will be welcomed universally and I trust that you will accept the call at this moment. I think that you can render the greatest service at this moment and add to your laurels, and I am very anxious that you should give me your authority to announce your name. We want a man of your calibre and experience, and nobody can well, at this critical moment as far as I can see, perform that duty and render that service to the community as you would be able to. I am afraid I have perhaps not expressed adequately how strongly I feel that your presence is necessary mainly and solely in the interests of the community, but I hope you will understand and if you can

1. Letter to his wife quoted in Azim Hussain, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

do, send me a wire 'accept it.' Your refusal will be the greatest misfortune and a terrible disappointment to me personally."[1]

Fazl-i-Hussain had, however, different plans. His heart had been set on provincial autonomy for some years, and he felt that centralized control of the provincial parties would render this impossible. More a realist and a capable administrator than an imaginative statesman, he did not anticipate how quickly the British were to leave or how real the power of ministries would be in 1937. He did not realize that the final phase of the struggle—"the war of succession"—was on. Not only did he decline the opportunity to preside over the momentous session of the All-India Muslim League but gave no encouragement to the Quaid-i-Azam when he visited Lahore, a few months later. He wrote to Sir Sikandar Hayat, "Jinnah's move in establishing a Central Parliamentary Board of the League was a wrong move, detrimental to Indian Muslims' interests," and firmly set his face against any interference in provincial politics by the All-India Muslim League. Two iron wills were in headlong collision. Quaid-i-Azam said to Raja Narendranath, during this visit, "Fazli thinks he carries the Punjab in his pocket. Raja Sahib, I am going to smash Fazli."[2] In the event, both statements proved correct. Fazl-i-Hussain died before the struggle started, but the success of his Unionist Party in 1935 elections proved that the Punjab was in his political heirs' pocket. But this was only a pyrrhic victory. Ten years later new forces operating under the leadership of the Quaid-i-Azam smashed the Unionist Party to smithers!

Mian Fazl-i-Hussain passed away on 9 July, 1936. His acute controversy with the Quaid during his last months has cast a deep shadow on his memory. Even otherwise, the policy followed by him during last years was severely criticised by his old friend Iqbal. He accused Fazl-i-Hussain of accentuating rural-urban differences among Muslims of the province and of supporting "some third-class men" for high offices so that there may be none

1. Quoted in Azim Hussain, *op. cit.*, pp. 306-307.
2. Azim Hussain, *op. cit.*, p. 310.

to challenge his supremacy. Mian Fazl-i-Hussain's son and biographer has attributed the position regarding leadership to the material at the disposal of his father, but adds, "There is, however, this to be admitted that in spite of the existence of the Unionist Party for over 12 years Fazl-i-Hussain found the party towards the end destitute of first rate Muslim leaders."[1]

Fazl-i-Hussain's actions and policies towards the end of his life have obscured his true image. The disastrous attitude which the Unionist Party took up on the very eve of the Partition has further estranged public opinion. In making an overall assessment, however, activities of a life-time have to be taken into consideration, and there is no doubt that during the twenties and early thirties Fazl-i-Hussain played a most important and essentially constructive role. If a single man is to be selected as the "maker of the modern Muslim Punjab," perhaps, the title would be his, in spite of his limitations. In spreading higher education among Muslims of the province, enabling them to gain political ascendency in the area and vigorously fighting for separate electorates and Muslim rights in the twenties, when even Quaid-i-Azam was following different policies he, in a way, paved the way for Pakistan.

SIR SIKANDAR HAYAT KHAN

Fazl-i-Hussain had done all the necessary spade work for giving the Unionist Party a good start under the new constitution, but he died, and the fruits of his labours were reaped by Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan. He belonged to another old family, but with much more "loyal" traditions than Fazl-i-Hussain could claim. His father Sardar Muhammad Hayat was on the personal staff of General Nicholson, the British Commandar at the time of reoccupation of Delhi in 1857, and the story is current that in his last moments the General gave him a letter of recommendation, written in his own blood. The help Sardar Muhammad Hayat gave to Syed Ahmed Khan has already been

1. Azim Hussain, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

described. Sir Sikandar was personally mild and courteous, and not only was he backed by the British officials, but was an old personal friend of Raja Narendranath, the leader of the Hindu Party in the Punjab Assembly. In the elections of 1937, the Unionists won 96 out of 175 seats, thus gaining a clear majority in the Assembly, but Sir Sikandar formed a coalition cabinet with three Muslims, two Hindus and one Sikh. He left the choice of non-Muslim representatives to the non-Muslim members, and did not attempt to impose on them persons of his or his party's choice as was attempted in the Congress provinces in respect of Muslim ministers. At the election the Unionist Party had opposed the Muslim League, but when after assumption of office, the Congress refused to take true Muslim representatives into cabinets and there was great bitterness amongst Muslims all over the country, Sir Sikandar joined hands with the Quaid-i-Azam. The Punjab Premier and the Quaid came to a compromise and at the Lucknow session of the All-India Muslim League, Sir Sikandar announced that he was advising all the Muslim members of the Unionist Party in the Punjab to join the League. This was the shining hour of Sir Sikandar's political career. His example was followed by Fazl-ul-Haq of Bengal, and new life was infused into the Muslim League. Chaudhri Khaliquzzaman commenting on Sikandar's action says:

"No one can deny that without this action on the part of Sir Sikandar the Muslim League fight would have been confined to minority provinces alone and sooner or later they would have had to go under. Sir Sikandar saved Muslim India by coming to the League session in Lucknow and by infusing life into the organization. His association with the Muslim League at this crucial hour in the fate of Muslim India is an event in history and must live for ever to remind us of his greatness." [1]

The formula which was evolved through correspondence between the Quaid and Sir Sikandar to resolve the old Punjab *vs.* the Centre conflict provided that in provincial matters the

1. Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan*, p. 290.

Muslim members of the Unionist Party would abide by the decisions of the Party while in All-India matters they would be under the discipline of the All-India Muslim League. This arrangement did not find favour with Sir Sikandar's non-Muslim colleagues and he was subjected to pressure from various directions. Occasionally there were signs of tension between the Punjab Premier and the League leadership, but there was no breakdown till after Sir Sikandar's death (on 26-12-1942). He was succeeded, as Premier, by Malik Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana, who along with his father, Sir Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana, had shown practical interest in the Pakistan scheme in its initial stages but was without Sir Sikandar's ability to reconcile conflicting points of view, and negotiations between him and the Muslim League President, held in April 1944, broke down.

In the elections of 1946 the Muslim League opposed the Unionist Party and won an overwhelming victory. The Muslim members of the Punjab Assembly were now in a position to make their contribution to the foundation of Pakistan and the developments in the Punjab on the eve of Partition have been described elsewhere.

BENGAL

A. K. FAZL-UL-HAQ

Events leading to the partition of Bengal and its annulment and the effect of this annulment on Nawab Salim Ullah Khan of Dacca have been outlined earlier. The "unsettling of the settled fact of the division of Bengal" meant the end of the political career of Salim Ullah but before he passed away from the scene he had selected the man who was to carry on the torch. Writing about Fazl-ul-Haq, whose long political career enabled him to bridge the gulf between the first Partition of Bengal and the creation of Pakistan, A. F. Noor-un-Nabi says, "Nawab Sir Salimullah Bahadur of Dacca was the recognized leader of the Muslims of Bengal at the time. His discerning eyes fell upon Mr. Fazl-ul-Haq. Soon after he joined the High Court Bar, at the instance of the Nawab he was selected to preside over the annual



(p. 220) A.K. FAZL-UL-HAQ

session of the Bengal Presidency Muslim League held at Dacca in 1912. The Presidential address which Mr. Fazl-ul-Haq delivered at the time at once marked him out as a gifted leader of the Muslims and as the intellectual successor of Nawab Khwaja Sir Salimullah Bahadur in the political field."[1]

Maulvi Abul Kasem Fazl-ul-Haq was born in October 1873 in a village of Barisal district of East Pakistan. His father, one of the earliest Muslim graduates, was Government pleader and Public Prosecutor. His grandfather was a good scholar of Persian and a successful Vakil. Fazl-ul-Haq had a brilliant educational career. He was educated at Barisal District School and later at Presidency College and took his M.A. in 1896 in mathematics. Subsequently, he got Law Degree and was enrolled as a Vakil in the Calcutta High Court in 1900, having been junior to the late Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee. The sudden death of his father compelled him to join the Bengal Civil Service in 1905. He worked as Deputy Collector and was promoted Deputy Registrar, Co-operative Credit Societies, Eastern Bengal and Assam. He, however, resigned[2] in 1912 and resumed practice at Calcutta High Court. Next year he was elected unopposed to the Bengal Legislative Council, and continued to be a member of the provincial Legislature till 1954 when he became Governor of East Pakistan. He was already associated with the Bengal Presidency Muslim League. From 1916 to 1921 he was President of the All-India Muslim League and was also the General Secretary of All-India National Congress during the year 1918-19. During this period his main contribution to the welfare of the Bengal Muslims was the safeguarding of their interests at Lucknow. He was one of the signatories of Lucknow Pact, under which Muslims of Bengal got 40% of elected seats. This was substantially less than their share on the basis of population, but considering that they got only 10.4% representation under Minto-Morley Reforms, it meant a

1. *Pakistan Observer*, Dacca, Eid Supplement.

2. According to *Nawa-i-Waqt* (29-4-1962) this resignation was submitted in protest against the annulment of partition of Bengal. A writer says in *Pakistan Observer*, 'Sher-i-Bangala Supplement', April 27, 1965, that Fazl-ul-Haq gave up his job at the call of Nawab Salimullah (p. 1)

great improvement and actually represented the biggest gain accruing to any Muslim province.

Like Quaid-i-Azam and Fazl-i-Hussain, Fazl-ul-Haq parted company with the Congress when it gave up constitutional means for achieving its political aims, and decided on Non-co-operation. In 1924 he became Education Minister in Government of Bengal, but the Ministry was overthrown within six months, owing to the opposition of the Swarajists, under C.R. Das, who had the support of the Muslim Khilafatists. Even during this short term of office Fazl-ul-Haq established the Islamia College, Calcutta. The other steps which he took for the betterment of Muslims in educational and cultural spheres were the creation of a special directorate for Muslim education and provision of a new double-storeyed building for the Muslim Institute at Calcutta.

During the years 1925 to 1936, Fazl-ul-Haq did not find any place in the provincial government, but he was not politically inactive. Unluckily no comprehensive account has appeared of his eventful public life, or of other important Muslim leaders of Bengal, and one has to rely on an occasional glimpse one gets in general political histories. Ram Gopal, for example, quotes from a memorandum, which Fazl-ul-Haq submitted to the Reforms Enquiry Committee in 1924, presumably after his resignation, in which he urged the need for proper safeguards while extending the system of representative Government.[1] Next year he presided at the Bengal Muslim Conference held at Faridpur on 2 May, 1925, when he urged the Muslims to organize themselves, to start an association on the lines of Hindu Mahasabha and to cover the whole of Bengal with a network of branches.[2]

After 1919, Khilafat movement had gained great momentum throughout the subcontinent, and in Bengal always responsive to political activity, was vigorous among Muslim masses. The movement lost its hold in Bengal, as elsewhere, after the abolition of

1. Ram Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 174.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

Khilafat by Ataturk, but many leaders of the movement who had worked closely with the Hindus during the Khilafat-Congress concord remained aloof from the political struggle for Muslim rights till practically the beginning of the Pakistan movement. Maulana Akram Khan, the President of the Bengal Khilafat Committee remained with the Congress for many years and worked on the Committee to inquire into Chittagong Armoury Raid in 1931. Similarly we see Ashraf-ud-Din Ahmad Choudhri (later a member of Nizam-i-Islam party, and a minister in Abu Hussain Sarkar's cabinet in East Pakistan) presiding over the Bengal Muslim Political Conference held on 21 April, 1930 at Chittagong and urging co-operation with the Congress in Salt Satyagraha, launched by Mr Gandhi. Faridpur district, which had a tradition of anti-British political activity since the days of the Faraizis was, in June 1931, the venu of All-Bengal Nationalist Muslim Conference, with Dr. Ansari as the president and Moazzam Hussain Choudhri (better known as Lal Mian in Pakistan) as Chairman of the Reception Committee. Another veteran leader, who took part in anti-British agitation was Maulvi Tamizuddin Khan who later bacame President of Pakistan Constituent Assembly. He also came from Faridpur and spent 14 months in jail during the Non-Co-operation movement. Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, who later migrated to Assam and before the incorporation of Sylhet in Pakistan was President of the Provincial Muslim League of Assam, was also originally associated with the Khilafat movement in Bengal.

In the meanwhile, the constitutional struggle gradually gained momentum. In the Provincial Committee which was set up in 1927, to aid the Simon Commission, Muslim Bengal was represented by Sir Abdul Karim Ghaznavi, K.G.M. Faruqui, A.K. Fazl-ul-Haq, and Maulvi Abul Kasim. Fazl-ul-Haq dissented from the views of other members who favoured establishment of an upper chamber in Bengal. We again find him representing Bengal, along with Sir Abdul Rahim and Sir Abdul Halim Ghaznavi. He took an active part in the deliberations of the Round Table Conference where he delivered strong speeches in support of the demands of Bengal Muslims. When Hindus and Muslims failed to come to an

agreement at the Round Table Conference, the British Premier gave his Communal Award, under which the representation of Bengal Muslims, though not in accordance with the population and dependent for its being effective on the support of European members of the Assembly, showed substantial improvement over the old position. There were efforts to have this Award modified, and in 1933, Fazl-ul-Haq organized a number of meetings to resist the reopening of the Award.

KHWAJA NAZIM-UD-DIN

Meanwhile a new political figure was emerging in the Provincial Council. The Bengal Ministry had a chequered career and the diarchy had to be suspended in the province four times owing to the inability of the non-official Ministers to secure a vote of confidence, and the reluctance of Congress and pro-Congress groups to let any Ministry function. This position was quite differnt from the Punjab where diarchy had functioned without a break and had strengthened the Muslim position. In Bengal, the first stable Ministry was formed in December, 1929, when Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din was, for the first time, included in the Cabinet (along with Khan Bahadur K.G.M. Faruqui and a Hindu minister). Thereafter the diarchy followed a steady course in Bengal. Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din continued in the cabinet, first as a Minister (1929-34) and later as an Executive Councillor, till the formation of government under the new Act in 1937. He belonged to the family of Dacca Nawabs, and was the son of Nawab Salim Ullah Khan's sister. He was born on 19 July, 1894, and was educated at M.A.-O. College, Aligarh and Trinity Hall, Cambridge. On his return from England he started taking active interest in civic and political affairs. He was Chairman of Dacca Municipality from 1922 to 1929 and also served on the Executive Council of Dacca University. He left Dacca in 1929 to join the Provincial Ministry.

Fazl-ul-Haq who had not been associated with the Bengal Government after 1924, continued to practise at Calcutta. He had a large number of Hindu friends, and in many periods during



(p. 224)

KHWAJA NAZIM-UD-DIN



H. S. SUHRAWARDY

his long public career he joined hands with the Congress and Hindu groups in provincial or municipal politics. In 1935-36 he was Mayor of Calcutta. When elections were held under the Government of India Act of 1935, he organized a Krishak-Proja (Peasant-Tenant) Party with a full-blooded radical programme of economic reconstruction of the province, abolition of Zamindari and measures for removal of political discontent, through release of detenues, internees and political prisoners. Possibly, he wished to adopt, with modifications necessary for Bengal, the policy adopted by Fazl-i-Hussain in the Punjab. Even otherwise, his interest in the rural masses was genuine, and he was not closely associated with the big landlords in the manner in which Fazl-i-Hussain became linked up in the Punjab. Fazl-ul-Haq had served as an Assistant Registrar of Co-operative Societies and had had ample opportunities to see the hardships of Bengal ryot and study the literature dealing with the amelioration of their condition. With his Krishak-Proja Party, Fazl-ul-Haq undertook in 1936 to oppose the Muslim League at the new elections, and scored a notable victory. He defeated, in a straight fight, Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din, the leader of the Muslim League in Bengal. The result of the elections displayed an old trend of Bengal politics noticed even by the Simon Commission—the emergence of several small discordant parties and groups instead of the overwhelming success of one party. In the Bengal Assembly of 1937, the Congress had gained 60 seats, including 17 for the scheduled castes, the Muslim League gained 40, the Krishak-Proja Party obtained 35. There were 25 Europeans, 41 independent Muslims, 23 independent scheduled caste members, and 14 independent caste Hindus. With this composition of the Assembly, only a coalition cabinet could provide a stable government. Fazl-ul-Haq became the Chief Minister on April 1, 1937 and continued to hold this position for almost full six years. On the formation of the Coalition, the relationship between the Krishak-Proja Party and the Muslim League improved, and Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din, who was elected by mutual agreement in a by-election, became the Home Minister. When the Congress refused to take genuine Muslim representatives in Provincial Governments, and there was widespread dissatisfaction amongst Muslims, Fazl-ul-Haq attended the Lucknow session of the All-India Muslim League

(September, 1937) and announced, like Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and Sir Saad Ullah Khan of Assam that members belonging to his Party would join the Muslim League. Thereafter, he toured extensively within and beyond the province in support of the League. He moved the famous Lahore Resolution in 1940, but partly the personal rivalries within the province and partly his own temperament, brought him in conflict with the Quaid-i-Azam. The problem of the relationship between regional political parties and a national organization is not an easy one in initial stages of political development. It is particularly difficult when the regional parties have contested elections and, as was the case in the Punjab and Bengal, come into power after defeating the nominees of the national organization. So far as Fazl-ul-Haq was concerned, things came to a head on a comparatively minor point. In 1941 a Defence Council was formed by the Government of India, on which the League Premiers of Bengal, the Punjab, and Assam were nominated. Quaid-i-Azam and the Working Committee of the Muslim League, who did not approve of a formal association of the League Premiers with the war effort at the national level without some agreement with the Government on the League demands, asked the three Premiers to resign their seats. All of them complied with the resolution of the Working Committee but Fazl-ul-Haq did this under protest, and to show his annoyance resigned his membership of the League Working Committee. Fazl-ul-Haq's stand, however, was not shared by some of his colleagues—particularly Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din and Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy—and the Bengal Leaguers organized demonstrations against him. There was a temporary truce, but when the Legislature met again at the end of November, 1941, it was learnt that a new "Progressive Coalition Party" had been formed. On this, the Muslim colleagues of Fazl-ul-Haq resigned. Thereafter, he accepted the leadership of the new party, while his opponents formed a new Muslim League Party, with Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din as its head. On 16 December, 1941, Fazl-ul-Haq formed a new Ministry in coalition with non-Muslim members. His Cabinet included nine members, of whom five, including the Premier, were Muslims and four Hindus. Two Hindu members were from the Forward Block, one represented

the scheduled castes and the fourth was Dr. Shyama Prashad Mukerjee, a militant leader of Hindu Mahasabha, who later founded Jana Sangh. Fazl-ul-Haq's new Ministry was able to command a majority in the Assembly, but the by-elections showed its total loss of support so far as the Bengal Muslims were concerned. Soon Dr. Mukerjee got into difficulties with the Governor and resigned in November, 1942. This was a period of great anxiety as Japanese troops had reached very near the borders of Bengal and Fazl-ul-Haq had differences with the Governor over administrative measures necessary for war work. On 28 March, 1943 he resigned. On 24 April, 1943, Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din formed a Ministry which was to remain in the saddle till after the elections of 1945. Other prominent Muslim members of the Cabinet were Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, Maulvi Tamizuddin Khan, the Education Minister, and Khwaja Shahab-ud-din. The parliamentary secretaries who gained prominence later included Muhammad Ali of Bogra (later Prime Minister of Pakistan), Fazl-ur-Rahman (later Education Minister, Government of Pakistan) and Tafazzal Ali Chowdhury.

HUSSAIN SHAHEED SUHRAWARDY

A Government headed by a staunch Muslim Leaguer was firmly in the saddle in Beagal by the end of April, 1943. When elections which were to decide the fate of the subcontinent were held at the end of 1945, the Muslim League greatly improved its position and won 116 out of 119 Muslim seats. This success was due to the general popularity of the Muslim League, but the great organizing ability of Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, who had emerged as the strong man of Nazim-ud-Din Cabinet, was also an important factor. It did not, therefore, surprise anyone when the parliamentary party elected, as its leader, Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy instead of Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din.

The new Premier, who presided over the destinies of Bengal during a fateful period, belonged to a family which has produced many public men of note. His maternal grandfather was the well-known educationist and poet, Maulana Ubaid Ullah Ubaidi

Suhrawardy (1834-86), who was a friend of Syed Ahmed Khan and was, for many years, Superintendent of the Dacca Madrasah, where he was buried after his death. Other prominent members of the family were Ubaidi's daughter (and Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy's mother), Khujista Akhtar Banu Begum, a well-known Urdu writer and a pioneer in girls' education, and Ubaidi's two sons, Sir Abdullah Suhrawardy and Sir Hassan Suhrawardy. (Sir) Abdullah Al-Mamun Suhrawardy (1882-1935) was among those young men who, during their student days in England, organized Pan-Islamic Society at London. He was its first Secretary. In 1905, he brought out a beautiful little book, *The Sayings of Muhammad*, which has been re-published in 'The Wisdom of the East' Series. Shaheed's father Zahid Suhrawardy was a Barrister, but he joined the judicial service and worked as District Judge and in other posts. He passed away in 1949.

Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy was born at Midnapur in 1893, and was educated at Calcutta Madrasah, St. Xavier College, and Oxford University. He entered politics on the side of the Swarajist leader C.R. Das, and was Deputy Mayor of Calcutta Corporation when C. R. Das was the Mayor. Apart from his gifts as an able orator, he prepared a solid base for his political work by organizing Bengal National Chamber of Labour, and gaining the support of a major portion of Calcutta labour. He entered Bengal Legislative Council after the Swarajists, had adopted the Council-entry programme. When C. R. Das was disowned by the Hindus and Hindu-Muslim relations deteriorated, Shaheed drifted towards the Muslim League, and became the Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League. Forthright and hard-hitting as ever, he now vigorously put forward the Muslim point of view. When at the meeting of the Khilafat Committee held at Calcutta in December 1928, the "Bengal group led by Maulana Akram Khan, Ashrafuddin Choudhri and Fazl-ul-Haq, were in favour of compromise with the Congress, the new Khilafat Committee of Calcutta, with Shaheed Suhrawardy leading it, was against any compromise with the Congress on the reservation for the majority in respect of Punjab Muslims."[1] The antagonism

1. Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

which some of Shaheed's speeches aroused—as also the tempers of some Hindu members of the Bengal Council—may be judged from the remarks made by J. K. Basu regarding Suhrawardy in a Council debate in 1932: "Take the loathsome reptile away! Stamp upon it and crush its head!" [1]

Shaheed Suhrawardy's first association with the provincial Government was as Minister of Civil Supplies in Nazim-ud-Din's Government, which took office in April, 1943. After this, his rise to political power was rapid. A brilliant speaker and a capable organizer, he had great influence with Calcutta Muslims and as secretary of the Bengal Provinical Muslim League he was able to strengthen his position in the whole province. His way was smoothened by the good sense of Khwaja Nazim ud-Din, who instead of competing or intriguing for power in 1946, kept aloof, and in fact left Bengal "for Delhi to be away from the scene." [2] Other prominent members of Suhrawardy's Cabinet, formed in 1946, were Khan Bahadur Muhammad Ali (of Bogra), and Fazl-ur-Rahman, who were in charge of Finance and Land Revenue, respectively. The Speaker of the Bengal Assembly was Khan Bahadur Nur-ul-Amin, who later became Chief Minister of East Bengal (Pakistan).

The Muslim League Government in Bengal had to face many problems, but its position was strong and there is no doubt that the solid support given to the demand for Pakistan by the Government of a major province was an important factor in the achievement of that demand. When in April 1946 newly elected Muslim legislators held an All-India Convention, which finalised the Muslim demand, the main resolution was moved by Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy. He also had to bear the brunt of "Direct Action Day", which was organized at Calcutta on 16 August, 1946, in accordance with a resolution passed by the Council of the All-India Muslim League.

1. *All-India Annual Register*, 1932, Vol. I, p. 219.
2. For details, see Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, *op. cit.*, p. 336.

At a time when in reply to the demand for Pakistan the Hindus demanded division of Bengal, Suhrawardy issued some statements and put foward a scheme for a "united, sovereign Bengal." He, however, stated that this proposal was put forward with the approval of the Quaid and his statement finds support from other sources.[1] The proposal was, however, opposed by the Congress High Command as well as the Hindu Mahasabha and was dropped. Some weeks after the Partition, Suhrawardy was offered a seat in the Pakistan Cabinet, but he stayed on at Calcutta to deal with communal bitterness. He joined hands with Mahatma Gandhi, and there is no doubt that it was this "Two-men Boundary Force," which saved Muslims in Calcutta and elsewhere in West Bengal from the fate which Muslims suffered at Delhi, and other places in Northern India. Indeed, many consider this Shaheed's "Finest Hour."

The three stalwarts, whose activities form the theme of this section—Fazl-ul-Haq, Nazim-ud-Din and Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy—lived on to play significant parts in Pakistan. Those activities belong to the history of the new state. They were political rivals and occasionally worked in opposition to one another, but East Pakistan has shown the same regard for all of them. They lie buried in the grounds of Dacca High Court, side by side, in a small piece of land which has already become the scene of political pilgrimage.

SIND

Sind was conquered by the British in 1843. For four years it was administered as a separate province but in 1847 it was joined to Bombay, the nearest British territory at that time. Even under the Mirs of Sind the day-to-day administration was in the hands of the Hindu Amils, whose position greatly improved under the British. Trade and industry was, of course, the Hindu monopoly everywhere. An effort to stem the tide was made by Hassan

1. Vide *Indian Annual Register*, 1941, Vol. I, p. 112, for Sarat Chandra Basu's letter addressed to Quaid-i-Azam in continuation of their earlier conversations.

Ali Effendi, who was a lawyer and had established in Karachi a branch of the Central National Mohammedan Association, founded by Syed Amir Ali in Calcutta. When Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy of India, visited Karachi in 1886, "Mr. Hassan Ali on behalf of his Association, read an address in which it was openly asserted that the European officials of Sind were under the influence of the Hindus and that the Mohammedans were kept out everywhere."[1] After this, the Sind administration took some remedial measures, but Hassan Ali's even more beneficial work was the establishment of the Sind Madrasatul-Islam in 1885. It started in a very small building, but next year foundation-stone of the Madrasa's present magnificent building was laid by Lord Dufferin. The demand for a proper grant for the Madrasa by the Karachi Municipality was resisted by the Hindu members but their "contention was defeated by the combined votes of the Mohammedan and European Municipal Commissioners." Gupta, who relates this, adds: "Since then, Hindus and Muslims in Sind have been drifting apart."[2]

Hassan Ali passed away in 1896, but his son Wali Muhammad, who was the Principal of the Madrasa continued to look after the institution.

In 1907 the All-India Mohammedan Educational Conference held its sessions at Karachi, when the position of the Muslims of Sind was reviewed. Nothing substantial could, however, be done as Sind was tagged on to Bombay and was being administered on peculiar administrative lines from that far-off place.

The administrative arrangements were so unsatisfactory and Commissioner of Sind had such dictatorial powers that when in 1913 the All-Indian National Congress met at Karachi, the Chairman of the Reception Committee urged the separation of Sind from Bombay. The Hindus of Sind originally favoured the separation of Sind from Bombay and its being joined to the Punjab,

1. Nagendranath Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
2. *Ibid.*

with which it had become closely connected after opening of North Western Railway, and for which Karachi was the natural outlet. Muslims, largely under the influence of Pirs and big Zamindars, were traditionally conservative, but during the visit of Edwin Montagu to Karachi in 1917 the Sind branch of National Mohammedan Association raised the question of separation of Sind. In 1925, the All-India Muslim League adopted a resolution moved by Sheikh Abdul Majid Sindhi, urging separation of Sind from Bombay. The Delhi prorposals of 1927 included the separation of Sind as one of Muslim demands. Thereafter, separation of Sind became an All-India question and the proposal was vehemently opposed by the Hindu leaders. Even the Bombay Provincial Committee, which was appointed to work with the Simon Commission and was presided over by Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto, did not recommend separation, though Syed Miran Muhammad Shah dissented from the majority view. The Simon Commission, only, recommended examination of the financial and administrative details of the proposal. By now Sind Muslims were getting organized and a new leadership was rising. The case for the separation of Sind had been argued before the Bombay Committee by a deputation on behalf of Sind Mohammedan Association. The leading lights of this deputation were Khan Bahadur Muhammad Ayub Khuro, and Khan Bahadur Wali Muhammad Hassan Ali, son of the founder of Sind Madrasah. Thereafter, Khan Bahadur Khuro was particularly active. He issued a booklet "Sufferings of Sind", in reply to Hindu criticism and visited England to appear before the Joint Parliamentary Select Committee. The Muslim opinion was, now, unanimously in favour of separation and in the Government of India Act of 1935 the demand for separation of Sind was accepted.

Sind became a separate autonomous province on April 1, 1936 and contrary to expectations its financial position was also satisfactory, but politically the picture for the first few years was very confused. Coupland, who reviewed the working of provincial self-government till the end of 1942 was very critical. "The separation of Sind from Bombay had been a concession to communalism. Its Moslems had been lifted from a minority status to

that of a majority. It was clearly up to them to make a success of the new 'Moslem Province', but they betrayed from the outset an even more desperate[1] incapacity to unite for the purpose of forming a strong and stable administration than the Moslems of Bengal or of Assam . . . Elsewhere, as has been seen, governments were deprived of security and self-confidence by this lack of a steady and coherent party system, but nowhere was their hold on office more hazardous than in Sind." An account of what happened in Sind politics from 1937 to 1946 makes a most dismal reading. Nobody seemed to have any loyalty except to himself. Even the verteran leader of a party would unceremoniously cross the floor of the House, if that seemed the only means of securing a ministership. For quite a time Khan Bahadur Allah Baksh maintained a pro-Congress government mainly with the help of Hindu votes. He was dismissed by the Governor, when he renounced his title and expressed pro-Congress views, after it started Direct Action against the Government in 1942. On 22 October 1942, Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah formed a Coalition Government consisting of the two members of the Muslim League, one independent Muslim, and two Hindus. This Ministry started well and for the first time it appeared that the Muslim League had, after all, obtained control of the province. All the Muslim Ministers joined the League, and on 3 March, 1943, the Sind Assembly passed a resolution on the lines of the Lahore Resolution of 1940. On 14 May the ex-Premier, Allah Bakhsh, was set upon by four men near Shikarpur and shot dead. "The murder was said to have nothing to do with politics."[2] Khan Bahadur M. A. Khuro was implicated but was discharged for want of proof.

The differences amongst the Muslim members, however. undermined the position of the Ministry. Acute differences arose between G. M. Syed, the President of the Sind Muslim League and Premier Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, which gradually crystallized on the basis of principles and policies. On July 7, 1944,

1. Coupland, R., *Indian Politics 1936-1942*, p. 65.
2. Compland, R., *The Future of India*, p. 3.

the Working Committee of the Sind Provincial Muslim League passed a resolution criticising the Muslim League Ministry for failure to give relief to the Haris and formation of syndicates for handling food purchases, and called upon the Ministers to resign. In December, 1944, Quaid-i-Azam tried to settle the differences between the provincial Premier and the head of the provincial League, but without a real success and the position of the Ministry remained unsteady. On 2 January, 1946, G.M. Syed was expelled from the All-India Muslim League by the Action Committee of the League. Next month a coalition was formed between Congress and the Muslim dissident groups including supporters of G.M. Syed and late Khan Bahadur Allah Bakhsh, and Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah tendered his resignation. The position was so unsettled that the Governor of Sind prorogued the Sind Legislative Assembly and ordered re-elections which were held in December, 1946. These elections which were fought on party tickets resulted in the election of twenty Congressmen, thirty-five Muslim Leaguers, and three Europeans and two members of Jamiat. The Muslim League Ministry was reformed on 3 January, 1947, with Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah as Premier and with Messrs. M. A. Khuro, Pir Ilahi Bakhsh, Pirzada Abdus Sattar, Mir Ghulam Ali Khan Talpur, and Mir Bunde Ali Khan Talpur, as Ministers. On the 26 June, 1947, Sind Legislative Assembly decided at a special sitting that Sind should join the new Pakistan Constitutional Assembly and thus Sind became the first province to opt for Pakistan under the scheme of 3 June 1947.

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

In North-West Frontier Province, Muslims were in the overwhelming majority. When in 1901, Lord Curzon created a new province by separating some districts from the Punjab, the Hindu opinion was opposed to the step. Later they opposed the extension of full-fledged reforms to the province. The Muslim League made the grant of reforms to N.W.F.P. one of its basic demands, but Hindu leaders like Mehr Chand Khanna, who later became a Minister in Dr. Khan Sahib's Government, continued to urge, that reforms should not be extended to N.W.F.P. These efforts, how-

ever, failed and at the Round Table Conference, it was decided that the Government of India Act should be applied to North-West Frontier Province.

On 30 April, 1932 the Legislative Council of the N.W.F.P. was inaugurated by the Viceroy, and Sahibzada Sir Abdul Qayum, the founder of Islamia College, Peshawar (which has now blossomed into Khyber University) became the first important non-official Minister. At the later elections in 1937, however, a different leadership came into power, and to trace its history, it is necessary to retrace some steps. North-West Frontier Province is populated by the Pathans, who have a long tradition of opposition to the British. They took an active part in the Khilafat movement, and many amongst those who tried to migrate to Afghanistan during the Hijrat Movement of 1921, were inhabitants of N.W.F.P. Amongst those who took an active part in this movement was Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He belongs to an old land-owning family which has fully benefited by modern education. His brother, Dr. Khan Sahib received his education in England, where he got married and later joined the Indian Medical Service. Abdul Ghaffar Khan, however, was so much disgusted with the British treatment of the Pathans, that he refused to go to modern colleges. He became an associate of Haji of Tarangzai, who had long waged bloody fights against the British and ultimately had to take shelter in the tribal area, away from the British administration. Abdul Ghaffar Khan did not follow the traditional Afghan method of anti-British activity, but in accordance with the line adopted by other Khilafat leaders, advocated boycott of British institutions, and organized a corps of volunteers called Khudai Khidmatgars, and adopted Gandhian techniques to such an extent that he came to be known as the Frontier Gandhi. His volunteers were known as the Red Shirts, after the colour of the shirts worn by them. In political matters, the Red Shirts made a common cause with the Indian National Congress. The Frontier Province had no communal problem like the Punjab or Bengal, where the even distribution of the population led to constant rivalry and conflict. The Muslim League was also very weak, and political life, apart from anti-British activity, was confined,

"to the traditional rivalry and quarrels of Khans or quasi-feudal land-owners whose influence was now being challenged by the growth of an educated middle class."

In the absence of opposition from a well-organized political party, the Red Shirts leadership succeeded in defeating the representatives of the old aristocracy and when the new Act came into force in 1937, government was formed by Dr. Khan Sahib, the brother of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. By now, cohesion between Red Shirt leaders and the Congress was practically complete. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, when he was out of jail, was an important member of the All-India Congress Working Committee, and in 1935 the venue of the Congress at its All-India session, was named Ghaffar Nagar after him. Gandhi paid repeated visits to the province to bring it fully in line with the Congress-dominated areas. In 1939, Dr. Khan Sahib's Ministry resigned along with other Congress Governments, at the command of the Working Committee. For some time, the province was without a popular Government, but on 25 May, 1943, Sardar Aurangzeb Khan, the Provincial Muslim League leader, was able to form a Ministry, with Sardar Abdur Rab Khan Nishtar as his Finance Minister. The by-elections fought thereafter resulted in decisive victories for the Muslim Leauge, but when after the war the Congress Ministry resumed office, Dr. Khan Sahib again became the Premier, with Mehr Chand Khanna in charge of "Finance, Information, National Saving Scheme, Elections, Industries and Companies, Co-operative Societies, Agriculture, Veterinary and Marketing, Stationery and Printing Departments." The conflict between the Muslim League, which was gradually gaining strength, and the Congress Party, continued to increase. When the Congress entered the Interim Government at Delhi in October 1946, Nehru visited the tribal areas, but his tour was far from successful. As a matter of fact, there were persistent hostile demonstrations and at times his life was in danger.

In the same year Khan Abdul Qayum Khan, who was a prominent Congress leader of the Frontier and was at one time the deputy leader of the Congress Party in the Central Assembly,

resigned from the Congress and joined the Muslim League. He now became the leader of the Opposition in the Frontier Assembly. On 20 February, 1947, he was arrested at Mardan, where the Muslim League had just won a by-election. In retaliation the League started a civil disobedience movement against the Frontier Government, which took drastic measures to deal with the challenge. This led to worsening of the situation, and on March 10 serious communal rioting broke out in Peshawar. Quaid-i-Azam, "always quick to oppose communal violence, sent an urgent request to the Frontier League to refrain from provocative action,"[1] and Pir Sahib of Manki Sharif, who had organized the demonstrations "ordered his followers to limit themselves to peaceful resistance."[2] The struggle between the League and the Congress was going on when Mountbatten Plan for the future of India was announced, according to which two separate Constituent Assemblies were to be set up and different areas were to choose which Assembly to join. On 6th of May, 1947, an emergency meeting of the Congress Working Committee was held at Delhi, at which the Frontier situation was discussed. After this, for the first time, a proposal for an independent state for Pathans was mooted by certain leaders associated with Dr. Khan Sahib's cabinet. On 3 June, 1947, the Viceroy announced his plan which was accepted by the Congress and the League. This provided for "a referendum in the N.W.F.P, without any disturbance in the present Ministry, to decide which of the two constitutional assemblies they would join."

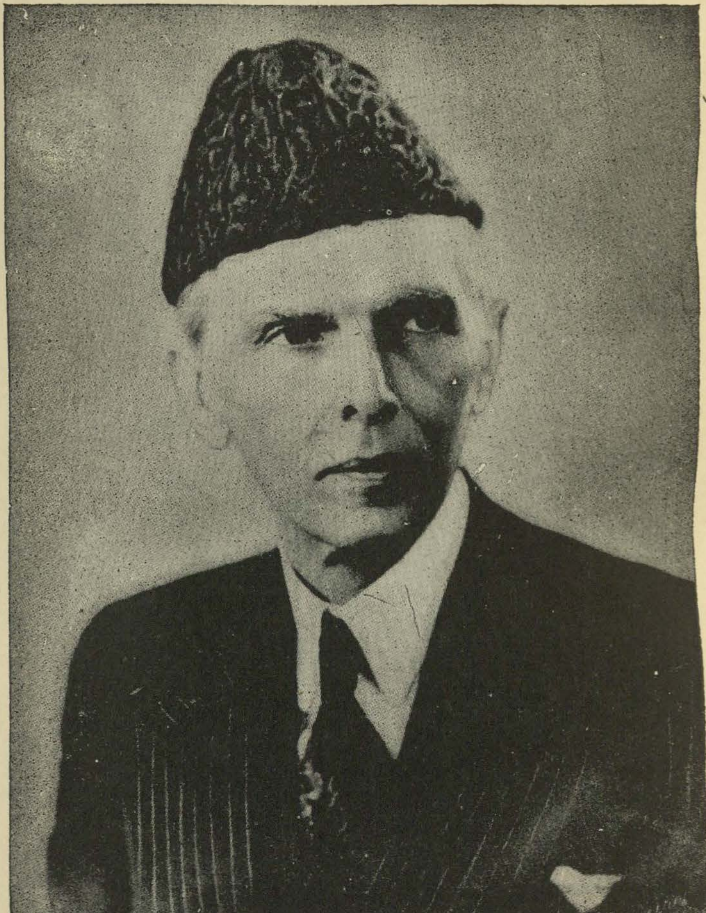
On June 18, talks were held between Mahatma Gandhi, Quaid-i-Azam and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. In view of the objection taken by the Congress Ministry at Peshawar and the Congress leaders at Delhi, the Governor of the province, Sir Olaf Caro, to whom the Congress leaders had objected, was granted "leave for a period of two months during which time the referendum was to be held there." General Sir Robert Lockhart was appointed Governor for this period. The referendum which

1. James, W. Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, p. 195.
2. *Ibid.*

was held from 6 July to 17 July, and of which results were announced on 20 July, decided in favour of Pakistan. Votes cast in favour of Pakistan were 289,244, while those in favour of India numbered only 2,874. The Red Shirts had boycotted the referendum, but as stated by Brecher, the biographer of Nehru, "the consensus of opinion was that a majority would have favoured Pakistan even if Redshirts had contested the issue."[1] Considering that slightly more than half of the entire strength of the electorate (572,98) had cast their votes in favour of Pakistan and that this proportion was very much higher in relation to the valid votes cast in the last election (375,989) the accuracy of the information obtained by Brecher from Indian politicians is obvious.

On 29 June, 1947, at a special meeting of the Shahi Jirga, Baluchistan also decided to join Pakistan.

1. Brecher, *Nehru : A Political Biography*, p. 351.



(p. 239) QUAID-I-AZAM MUHAMMAD ALI JINNAH

Quaid-i-Azam
MUHAMMAD ALI JINNAH
(1876—1948)

I
THE BEGINNING

MAULANA Muhammad Ali is reported to have said towards the end of his life, "I learnt Islam from Abul Kalam Azad and Iqbal—one pulls me in one direction, and the other points to the opposite way." Ultimately he gravitated towards the view-point of the poet, but the man, who did most to give a concrete shape to the political vision of Iqbal, was another Muhammad Ali, whose transformation, through a painful process, from being an accredited "Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity" to the most thorough-going championship of Muslim separatism completely altered the course of Indian history.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah, whose parents belonged to a business community of Kathiawar, was born at Karachi in 1876. He might have followed the profession of his forefathers, but he showed such early signs of brilliance, that an English friend of the family advised his father to send the young Muhammad Ali to qualify for the bar. He, therefore, left for England at the age of sixteen and returning to India in 1896, began to practise as a barrister in Bombay.

Jinnah had some very difficult years to pass through at the beginning of his legal career. He, however, was not only able to win for himself a leading position at the bar, but soon found wider scope for his talents. He made his debut in Indian politics in 1906, and in quite a characteristic manner. "His own political views had been shaped by association with Gokhale, Dadabhai Naoroji and Surrendar Nath Banerjee" and his ambition, as he himself

admitted, was "to become the Muslim Gokhale."[1] Jinnah's earlier training and background determined his political platform, but he was also a Muslim, and not prepared to ignore the Muslim interests. His entry in Indian politics dates from 1906, when he attended the Calcutta session of the All-India National Congress, as the Private Secretary of the President—the celebrated Dadabhai Naoroji—but it is worth noting that his very first speech in the Congress arena was about a matter concerning the Muslims —"Waqf-al-Aulad."

Later, when he was elected to the Imperial Legislative Council, he sponsored the Waqf Validating Bill, which brought him in closer touch with the Muslim leaders, and his help was now sought by the Muslim community on many occasions. He even attended a session of the All-India Muslim League by invitation, but refused to sign its pledge, as he thought that its objective was not high enough. He stuck to the All-India National Congress, and as he said in reply to an article by *The Times*, London, was "proud to belong" to the Congress party. In March 1913, however, the All-India Muslim League amended its constitution so as to provide for the attainment of "a suitable form of self-government", as its goal. Jinnah was at that time in England. When in the latter part of the year, (Sir) Syed Wazir Hasan, the Secretary of All-India Muslim League and Maulana Muhammad Ali visited England in connection with the Cawnpore mosque, they asked him to join the League under its revised constitution. As the main objection which he had to joining the League had now disappeared, Jinnah consented, and the League got its most forceful personality.

II

AMBASSADOR OF HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY
(*A Successful Mission*)

Once enrolled as a member of the Muslim League, Jinnah began to play an energetic part in all its activities. Gokhale had

1. See *Mohammad Ali Jinnah* by M.H. Syed, (1st Ed.) p. 39.

already hinted that he was suitable for being "the best Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity" and he was not going to waste his opportunities. He began to work for Hindu-Muslim unity from within the League, and to achieve this object he got things so arranged that for the first time the session of the Muslim League was held at the same time and at the same place, as that of the Congress. This session was held in Bombay in 1915, and Mazhar-ul-Haq, who was known for his pro-Congress views, was the President of the Muslim League. At this session, Jinnah moved a resolution for the appointment of a committee, which should have powers to confer with other parties. This resolution was supported, amongst others, by Fazl-ul-Haq (at that time a member of the Muslim League) and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, and was unanimously adopted.

The next session of the League, which marked the culmination of Jinnah's efforts for Hindu Muslim unity, was held at Lucknow, and he himself was in the chair. The committee, which was appointed at Bombay, had done useful work in consultation with a similar committee, appointed by the All-India National Congress and after months of difficult negotiations a "Joint Scheme" of reforms was evolved. This scheme, which comprised agreed conclusions about the share of the Muslims under the new reforms, was enthusiastically adopted at the sessions of the League and the Congress. It is known as "the Lucknow Pact" and in India's dismal constitutional history represents the only period, when Hindus and Muslims came to agreed conclusions about their future.

Jinnah, in his efforts to bring Hindus and Muslims together, had succeeded beyond his dreams, but unluckily Gokhale did not live to see the success of his young colleague and admirer. He had died in February 1915.

III

HOME RULE LEAGUE

While Jinnah was negotiating and piloting the Hindu-Muslim

Pact, he was very much on the League platform, but he had not given up his interest in more general questions affecting India. When he signed the League pledge in 1913 "his two sponsors were required to make a solemn preliminary covenant that loyalty to the Muslim League and the Muslim interest would in no way and at no time imply even the shadow of disloyalty to the larger national cause to which his life was dedicated."[1] Even as the President of the Muslim League, he fully kept up his associations with the Indian National Congress, and was indeed considered as one of its leading lights. In 1916, he presided over the Bombay Provincial Conference, which had now met for the first time since the Congress split at Surat, and gave a correct lead not only to the nationalist circles in the Presidency but to the whole of the country. He was considered at this time the most important of the political leaders in Bombay, which had all along been the stronghold of Indian nationalism. When Mahatma Gandhi finally returned to India from South Africa, and the Gujrati citizens of Bombay presented him with an address of welcome, Jinnah was chosen to preside at the occasion. He was elected the chairman of the Bombay branch of the Home Rule League and was, by all accounts, the coming man in the Congress politics. Montagu, the Indian Secretary of State, who saw him in 1917, made the following remarks about him in his "Indian Diary," published after his death:

"They were followed by Jinnah, young, perfectly mannered, impressive looking, armed to the teeth with dialectics, and insistent upon the whole of his scheme. All its shortcomings, all its drawbacks—the elected members of the Executive Council, the power of the minority to hold up finance—all these were defended as the best makeshifts they could devise short of responsible government. Nothing else would satisfy them. They would rather have nothing if they could not get the whole lot. I was rather tired and I funked him. Chelmsford tried to argue with him and was tied up into knots.

2. Remarks by Mrs. Naidu quoted in *Mohammad Ali Jinnah* (M. H. Syed), p. 92.

"*Jinnah is a very clever man, and it is, of course, an outrage that such a man should have no chance of running the affairs of his own country.*"[1] (Italics ours)

Meanwhile Jinnah was doing everything possible to hasten the advent of the day, when his countrymen could get a chance of managing their own affairs. One serious obstacle which had often blocked up constitutional progress in India was the Muslim anxiety about the future, and nobody had done more than Jinnah to remove—at least for the time being—this formidable hurdle. But his political activities were not confined to the removal of a hurdle. He showed great capacity for running political organizations and under his chairmanship the Bombay branch of the Home Rule League became the most powerful limb of the organization, which at the time dominated the Indian scene. Jinnah dealt boldly and effectively with all reactionaries like Lord Sydneham, who were trying to hold up Indian progress, and in 1918, led a powerful agitation, which frustrated the attempts to call a meeting for presenting a farewell address to Lord Willingdon, the retiring Governor of Bombay. About the importance of the latter agitation in India's political history, the Communist newspaper "People's Age" wrote: "In 1918, in Bombay he [Jinnah] was one of the leading figures in the Anti-Willingdon-Memorial agitation which served to rouse the citizens of Bombay. It was a protest against the autocratic regime of Lord Willingdon, and perhaps, for the first time the people were asked to intervene against raising a memorial to a retiring Governor. *It constituted the beginning of the post-war agitation.*"[2] (Italics ours) Mr. Jinnah's work in this and other movements was appreciated so much by the citizens of Bombay, that they raised funds and built the famous "Jinnah People's Memorial Hall", which later housed the offices of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, and was the venue of important nationalist gatherings in the city of Bombay.

Jinnah was ably and—as appeared from the grant of Montagu-

1. *An Indian Diary* by Edwin S. Montagu, pp 57-58.
2. *People's Age*, Bombay, dated 19.9.48.

Chelmsford Reforms—fruitfully carrying on his political activities, when something happened, which changed the course of his activities. The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms meant a considerable advance over the existing positions, but any reassuring effect, they might have had on the public, was lost by the Muslim reaction to the treatment meted out to Turkey at the Peace Conference, and the general resentment at the Jallianwala massacre and other performances of the Punjab authorities.

In March 1919, Jinnah resigned from the Imperial Legislative Council, as a protest against the passing of what is known as the Rowlatt Act, and in his presidential address at the Calcutta session of the All-India Muslim League, held in September, 1920, gave vigorous expression to public resentment. He, however, was not in sympathy with the methods advocated by Mahatma Gandhi to deal with the new situation. He had his first public difference with the Mahatma over the change of the constitution of the Home Rule League. Gandhi had now become the President of the League instead of Mrs. Annie Besant, and soon took up the question of changing its creed and renaming it as Swaraj Sabha. Jinnah opposed these moves, pointing out that the constitution of the League could not be changed, except when three-fourth of the members voted for the change. The new President, however, gave the ruling that a bare majority could introduce the change, and when Jinnah's amendments were thrown out, he resigned from the League, now renamed Swaraj Sabha. Jinnah's exit from the Home Rule League meant the effective end of that organization. His break with the Congress came two months later. The annual session of the Indian National Congress was held at Nagpur in December, 1920, to consider the Gandhian scheme of non-co-operation. Many prominent leaders, like C. R. Cass, and Lala Lajpat Rai, had come to the session, determined to oppose the scheme, but they were won over and in the new atmosphere of enthusiasm and excitement created by their conversion, Jinnah found himself in a hopeless minority. The Congress passed a resolution in favour of non-co-operation, and Jinnah, who had vigorously opposed it, felt that he and the Congress must part Company.

III

AN AMBASSADOR OF HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

The Failure of a Mission

The urbane, constitutional Muhammad Ali Jinnah found, like the uncrowned king of Bengal—Surendranath Bannerjea—, that he could not follow the Indian National Congress on the unknown and tortuous path of non-co-operation, but "unlike other liberals and loyalist leaders, Mr. Jinnah did not decry the struggle directly or indirectly help the Government. He bided his time. He would not enter the legislature till the Congress lifted the boycott." [1] He was too cool-headed a person to be attracted by the emotional frenzy of the Khilafat movement, but as Rushbrook Williams points out, like Sir Muhammad Shafi and Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, he "was a tower of strength in striving to stem the migration" [2] following the disastrous Hijrat decision. Even otherwise, he continued to make his contribution to the national progress. He felt that there was still one sphere in which he could make himself useful to his people. The country may have lost interest in the political methods, by which he and his colleagues had obtained Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, and wanted to secure full Home Rule, but he was still the Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity. He could yet help in lifting the blocks which might hold up constitutional progress.

After a short interval in which the original programme of non-co-operation had to be radically modified, and the need for Hindu-Muslim unity became all the more pressing in view of the growing discord, Jinnah called a general meeting of the Muslim League, which had been dormant during the excitement of Khilafat days. The session was held at Lahore in May 1924. Before the proceedings commenced, Jinnah, in an interview with a press representative, outlined the objects, with which the session was being held. He said:

1. *People's Age* dated 19-9-48.
2. Rushbrook Williams, *The State of Pakistan*, p. 19.

"The object of holding the session is to concentrate the united Muslim opinion with regard to:

(*i*) the question of the amendment of the constitution of India.
(*ii*) to bring about a friendly understanding, in the Punjab in particular, where owing to certain causes, which seem insignificant, a great deal of misunderstanding has been created between Hindus and Mussalmans, and
(*iii*) to bring about in due course, through and by means of the All-India Muslim League organisation, once more an amicable settlement between the Hindus and the Muslims, as was done at Lucknow in 1916." [1]

The fact that Jinnah, in giving the reasons for the revival of the Muslim League was not indulging in any political window-dressing and was inspired by highest patriotic motives will be seen from his activities and speeches for many years, after this re-organization. In the course of the discussion on the Indian Finance Bill in 1925, he said on the floor of the Legislative Assembly:

" . . . I, Sir, stand here with a clear conscience and I say that I am a nationalist first, a nationalist second and a nationalist last . . . I once more appeal to this House, whether you are a Mussalman or a Hindu, for God's sake do not import the discussion of communal matters into this House, and degrade this Assembly, which we desire should become a real National Parliament. Set an example to the outside world and our people!" [2]

Jinnah in his attempt to repeat his perfomance of the Lucknow Pact was faced with heavy odds, but for a time, it seemed, as if he would win through. The question of Muslim share in the next instalment of reforms, was complicated by many tem-

1. See *Mohammad Ali Jinnah* (Syed), p. 305.
2. Quoted in *Eminent Mussalmans* (Natesan), p. 435.

porary causes of friction—the Shuddhi and the Hindu Sangathan movements, Multan and Malabar riots, the excitement following scurrilous attacks on the Holy Prophet by Arya Samaj writers. The situation in the Punjab was at its worst. A courageous and competent Muslim, once the General Secretary of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, had decided to give the Muslims a share in services and educational institutions, on the basis agreed for representation in the legislature at Lucknow. This had completely upset the Hindu intelligentsia of the Punjab, who not content with a complete monopoly of trade and industry and the so-called "professions," were unwilling to give Muslims their due share even in public services.

All these causes created an atmosphere of ill-will and distrust, which was hardly conducive to the success of Jinnah's dream of Hindu-Muslim entente, but he persisted with his task, and nearly 3 years after the League session at Lahore, a conference of Muslim leaders was held under his presidentship, and the Delhi (Muslim) Proposals were formulated. Under these proposals, the Muslims agreed, on certain conditions, to give up one right, on which they had insisted all along, and to which the nationalists were wont to attribute the growing separatism of Muslims—the right of representation through separate electorates. The conditions, in return for which the basic right was to be surrendered, were not formidable, and were, in course of time, fulfilled in all except in one or two minor matters. Delhi proposals were opposed by the Punjab Muslims, who insisted on separate electorates, but the Khilafat Conference and the All-India Muslim League endorsed them. Srinivas Iyengar, the President of Indian National Congress gave them his personal support, and the All-India Congress Committee, in a meeting held at Bombay in May 1927, passed a resolution unanimously accepting them.

The Delhi proposals were again "welcomed" at the annual general session of the Indian National Congress, held at Madras, but meantime, the wreckers had been at work. The formula was opposed by Dr. Moonje and other Hindu Mahasabha leaders (whose party was probably going to lose as much as anyone else

by the introduction of joint electorates). Jairamdas Daulatram, the Sind leader, also objected to the provision for separation of Sind. The Madras Congress, instead of accepting them finally, merely " welcomed " them, and referred the question to an All-Parties Conference, which again left the matter to the Nehru Committee.

It is amusing, in this connection, to read the remarks made by Pattabhi Sitaramaya, the official historian of the Indian National Congress, on the fate of this formula. He writes in his *History of the Congress* :

" It is not evolution of a formula that was required but the approximation of the hearts, a clearing of the minds, of the two great communities."

Can forced pleading go further ? Nobody denies the importance of "the union of hearts," but does that mean that formulas, which can form a basis for that, which can remove causes of friction, and dispel suspicions should be thrown away ?

Jinnah's efforts for the Hindu-Muslim unity had not received the response, which they deserved, but he persevered. Soon the appointment of the Simon Commission gave him an opportunity for making another bid for the success of his mission. He joined hands with the Congress in boycotting the Commission, and tolerated a complete split within the Muslim Leauge to be able to follow a common policy with the Indian National Congress. Sir Muhammad Shafi, who had been elected President of the League for 1927, and some of his co-workers who had lost all hopes of Hindu-Muslim agreement, felt that the Muslims must place their case before the Simon Commission. The other section of the League, however, under the leadership of Jinnah and Maulana Muhammad Ali, boycotted the Commission. The result was that there were two annual sessions of the League—one held under the presidentship of Sir Muhammad Shafi at Lahore and the other under the presidentship of Sir Muhammad Yaqub at Calcutta—where opposite views were expressed regarding the

Simon Commission.

Shortly after this, Jinnah, along with Srinivas Iyengar, left for Europe, and in his absence the Nehru Committee published its report on the constitutional reforms. The report was denounced by almost all Muslim leaders, except the "Nationalist Muslims", who stood for "unqualified support" to its recommendations. Maulana Shaukat Ali and Maulana Hasrat Mohani condemned it, and Maulana Muhammad Ali, on return from Europe, denounced it in typically strong language. Jinnah was also discouraged but he did not give up hope and suggested that some amendments to its recommendations might be adopted so as to make it acceptable to the Muslims. In December 1928, he went to Calcutta where a National Convention was called to finally consider the Nehru report. The sub-committee of the Convention turned down his amendments but Jinnah took up the matter in the open session. He argued ably and eloquently for the acceptance of his amendments, and received powerful support from Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. In a speech, asking the delegates not to lose a sense of proportion in dealing with matters of detail, raised by Jinnah, Sapru appealed to the audience :

" Gentlemen, remember, it is not only our own countrymen but the whole world is watching you. If you leave this Pandal with failure, you will have done a great damage to the country, from which it may not recover for a quarter of a century. The simple position is that for the sake of settlement you are invited by Jinnah, however illogically and unreasonably, to agree to the proposition, which I consider is not inconsistent with the Nehru Report."

Sir Tej's advice fell on deaf ears. The delegates completely forgot that Jinnah represented the extreme right wing of the Muslims, that already there was a powerful section of the community which had lost all hope of an agreement with the Hindus, and that if even his proposals were not accepted, there was no possibility, at all, of any Hindu-Muslim agreement. The most powerful speech against the proposals of Jinnah came from

M.R. Jayakar. He argued like a clever lawyer, who can argue about anything, but the chief weapon in his armoury was the threat that if Jinnah's amendments were accepted, his Hindu Mahasabha friends would revolt, and urge "their violent and arrogant claims."

The Convention bowed to Jayakar's pleadings and threats. The amendments moved by Jinnah were thrown out and "a great damage," in the fateful words of Tej Bahadur Sapru was done "to the country from which it" was not to "recover for a quarter of a century." Jinnah left the banks of Hoogli, heart-broken and finally convinced that his last self-imposed mission of Hindu-Muslim unity had been a complete failure. His reactions at this time have been recorded by Jamshed Nusserwanji, later a Mayor of Karachi, who went to see him off at the railway station. "He was standing at the door of his first-class coupe compartment, and he took my hand. He had tears in his eyes, as he said, 'Jamshed, this is the parting of the ways.' "[1]

IV

WANDERINGS IN THE WILDERNESS

The next few years constituted probably the most unhappy period in Jinnah's life. After the fiasco at Calcutta, there was nothing to do, but to rejoin those who, from the beginning, had distrusted the possibility of Hindu-Muslim unity. Maulana Muhammad Ali was another leader, who had learnt a bitter lesson at Calcutta. Both he and Jinnah (along with the Jamiat-ul-Ulama leaders) had kept aloof from the section represented by the Punjab Muslim leaders, but after being thoroughly discredited at Calcutta, they decided to close Muslim ranks. In January, 1929, an All-Parties Muslim Conference was held at Delhi, under the presidentship of H.H. the Aga Khan. This was probably the most representative Muslim gathering since the Simla Deputation, and included the representatives, amongst others, of the Khilafat Conference, the Jamiat-ul-Ulama, and the All-India

1. Hector Bolitho, *Jinnah, the Creator of Pakistan*, p. 95.

Muslim League (both Jinnah and Shafi sections). A long and comprehensive resolution was unanimously passed regarding the Muslim demands, which now included the ill-fated Delhi proposals *plus* the separate electorates.

The Muslim League held its annual session, which had been adjourned to see the results of the Calcutta convention, a few months later, and a resolution similar to the one passed at the Muslim Conference was adopted. Next year, Jinnah sailed for England to attend the Round Table Conference. He was, however, extremely unhappy and sore at heart. Even in the previous year, owing to the lukewarm reception given by the Congress leaders to his Delhi proposals, and the growing communalism amongst the Muslims and the Hindus, he was very unhappy. Dewan Chaman Lal, who was a fellow-traveller on the boat, which took him and Srinivas Iyengar to Europe, wrote an article, describing his daily life on the boat:

"Jinnah is frankly in a despondent mood. He is one of the few men who have no personal motives to nurse or personal aims to advance. His integrity is beyond question. And yet he has been the loneliest man!"[1]

This loneliness had increased since these lines were written. The house which Jinnah built had collapsed at Calcutta but he was equally unhappy at the sight of the communal edifice, which the Punjab Muslim leaders were building up. He belonged to a different tradition and was feeling miserable at the growing communalism of Hindus and Muslims. It is true that he attended the first session of the Round Table Conference, and helped to evolve a formula for that Hindu-Muslim agreement, which was again vetoed by (Hon.) Mr. Jayakar, but his role at the Round Table Conference was a minor one and the seven years subsequent to the Calcutta Convention, must be considered years of his wanderings in a political wilderness. As a matter of fact, out of disgust at the new shape of Indian politics, he left India and

1. Quoted in *Mohammad Ali Jinnah* (Syed), p. 402.

settled in England, to practice before the Privy Council.

At the Round Table Conference, the Muslim leadership passed to His Highness the Aga Khan, who was perhaps even better suited than Jinnah for the negotiations that were to ensue. He played his cards remarkably well, and with his suavity of manners and tact, and general attitude of helpfulness kept the Muslim team solidly together--which was in visible contrast to the many and discordant voices, which spoke from the other camp. He tried to come to an understanding with Mahatma Gandhi on the Hindu-Muslim question, but when these talks proved unfruitful, he negotiated a Minorities Pact, by which all sections of the Indian political life, except the caste Hindus, joined hands with the Muslims. This facilitated the task of the British Premier, in giving his Communal Award in 1932, which reduced the Muslim majorities in Bengal and the Punjab to a minority within the provincial legislatures, but at any rate marked an advance over what was being offered by the Congress. An important Government Resolution, laying down the Muslim share in the services under the Government of India, was also issued about the same time.

Jinnah was not invited to the later sessions of the Round Table Conference, but he was now residing in England, and had opportunities of meeting the delegates from India. An important contact, which he effectively renewed during this period was with Sir Muhammad Iqbal, who had come as a delegate to the Round Table Conference. Jinnah was the principal speaker at a reception given in honour of the poet by Iqbal Literary Association and thereafter invited him to lunch at his house. Thus began a series of meetings which were to leave a mark on the course of India's history. Jinnah was not now a delegate to the Round Table Conference, but during the first session, which he attended, he had criticised the conception of the central federation, which other delegates had supported enthusiastically. His objections were partly from the nationalist anglet—he inclusion of the autocratic princes at the centre would "water down democracy"—and partly from the Muslim point of view—a strong centre would nullify the provincial autonomy which the Muslims

valued so much. Iqbal, on the other hand, had a few years before, held out his plan for a Muslim bloc in the North-West This did not receive much consideration at the Round Table Conference, but the separation of Sind, and grant of full reforms to the North-West Frontier Province were bound to pave the way for its fulfilment. This plan, the poet discussed at length with Jinnah, and gradually convinced him that in this lay the only hope for a contented, peaceful India in general and for bulk of Indian Muslims in particular.

Iqbal had got Jinnah seriously interested in what came to be known as the "Pakistan Scheme", but even then he did not return to India to take it up. He was biding his time, watching events, brooding on them, and all the time, most unhappy. During the course of a brief visit to Oxford in 1932, he said to the present writer, with great anguish of soul, "But what is to be done ? The Hindus are short-sighted and I think, incorrigible. The Muslim camp is full of those spineless people who, whatever they may say to me, will consult the Deputy Commissioner about what they should do ! Where is, between these two groups, any place for a man like me ?"

Meanwhile he was getting reports from India that Indian Muslims were a flock of sheep without a shepherd. The Aga Khan's leadership was ineffective, as he wanted the palm without the dust, and could not give up the health resorts of France and Switzerland. Maulana Muhammad Ali was dead. So was Sir Muhammad Shafi, and even if he had been alive, he was too closely associated with a pro-British policy to inspire general enthusiasm. The League and the Muslim Conference had become the plaything of petty leaders, who would not resign office, even after a vote of no-confidence ! And, of course, they had no organization in the provinces, and no influence with the masses.

It was in these circumstances that certain well-wishers of the Muslims turned towards Jinnah. They requested him to return to India, and once again lead the army, which was fast becoming a rabble. Iqbal joined in these appeals. Jinnah relented, but even

now he would only visit India for a few months and return to England again. In 1934, however, he was elected the permanent president of the All-India Muslim League, and finally returned to India in October 1935.

Back in India, Jinnah began to reorganize the All-India Muslim League. Its annual session was held at Bombay in April 1936, under the presidentship of Sir Wazir Hasan, and its constitution was revised to make it a more democratic and living organization. Steps were also taken, for the first time, to set up a machinery for contesting elections on behalf of the Muslim League. A central election board with provincial branches was set up to take in hand arrangements for fighting the provincial elections under the Government of India Act of 1935. Jinnah toured the country to convass support for the League candidates, but his efforts were only partially successful. In the Punjab, he had the constant support of Iqbal, but could not come to an agreement with Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, the Unionist leader and League fared very badly in that 'key' province. Experience in Bengal was similar. In the elections, the League was actively assisted by the Jamiat-ul-Ulama, and had generally the goodwill of the Congress, which had been receiving support from Jinnah's Independent Party in the Central Legislative Assembly, but it failed to make much headway against firmly entrenched provincial parties.

THE RALLYING-POST

The provincial elections of 1937 produced many surprises. The League had not come out with flying colours. The Congress, on the other hand, achieved a success, which neither its supporters nor its opponents had anticipated. Most provincial Governors and British officials expected at the provincial elections a repetition of the previous elections to the Central Legislature, when Congress had won about 50 per cent of the Hindu seats. They looked to the provincial parties, which they had encouraged in various areas—the Unionists in the Punjab, the Justice Party in Madras, the Zamindars and the Nationalist party in U.P., the Marathas in Bombay—and were sure that although the Congress

may be the largest single party, it would have to depend on others to form ministries. Here they were to be completely disillusioned. The organizing ability of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who had succeeded Dr. Ansari as the chairman of the parliamentary board, the army of the workers, which the Congress had built up during the previous twenty years, the magic name of a Mahatma, and the whirlwind tours of the president, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, completely upset the official calculations. The Congress triumphed in all the Hindu provinces and even in the North-West Frontier !

There is no doubt that this unexpected success went to the head of the Congress leaders. Before and even during the elections, they were friendly to the Muslim League. Now they were cold and distant. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru declared at Calcutta that there were only two parties in the country—the British and the Congress. The League had fared so badly at the elections that it was not necessary to acknowledge its existence. To this attitude of high disdain, two other factors contributed. The Congress president was surrounded by certain left wing—almost de-Muslimised—Muslims, who later left even the Congress fold for the Communists' ranks. They urged on Nehru, that it was "medieval" to recognize political parties based on religions, and the Congress had only to organize a vigorous Muslim Mass Contact Movement to achieve the same success amongst the Muslims, which it had gained among the Hindus. Nehru was carried away by these visions, and an open breach occurred between the Congress and the League. While in the original elections, the Congress had supported the League candidates in U.P., now it set up a candidate to oppose the Muslim League in Bharaich constituency of U.P., which had returned a Leaguer, who died shortly after the elections.

The personality of the chairman of the Congress parliamentary board was another factor, which drove the Congress away from the League. Sardar Patel was a great organizer but for a man of his ability and importance, he was amazingly ill-informed about the background of Muslim politics, and even

otherwise perhaps freedom from communalism was not one of his many gifts. He was at this time at the summit of his power, and as the chairman of the Congress parliamentary board, bossed over all governments in the Congress provinces. He had to decide the question of Muslim representation in provincial governments, and he dealt with the problem in his usual, firm and unimaginative way. If he had faced the question in a spirit of statesmanship, he could have seen that Sir Sikandar Hayat and other Muslim premiers had already tackled the corresponding Hindu problem in the Muslim provinces, in a manner which could be a very safe guide to the Congress. Sir Sikandar Hayat's party was in absolute majority in the Punjab Assembly, but he offered the Hindu seat in the Government to the Hindu Mahasabha, and although Raja Narendara Nath, the president of the Hindu Party, was unable to accept it owing to old age, his nominee, Sir Manohar Lal was appointed a minister. There was really no other way to give honest, real, representation to the minorities. If a minister had to be taken, not on account of affiliation to the party, or any other personal claim, but to represent the minorities, it was obvious that he should be their genuine representative and not a stooge of the party in power. This, the iron-willed Sardar would not—or could not—grasp. Under the constitution, representation had to be given to the minorities. So he was prepared to have Muslim ministers—even from the Muslim League,—but then, they must resign from the League, sign the Congress pledge, and abide by its discipline. In other words, the minority representatives were not to represent the minorities but the Congress!

In imposing his iron discipline, the Sardar had some initial difficulties. The Muslim League had not done well in predominantly Muslim areas, but it had won the vast majority of seats in the Congress provinces. In some of these—like Bombay—not a single Muslim had been returned on the Congress ticket. So what was to be done about the representation of the Muslims in the Governments of these provinces? The problem was somewhat complicated, but the efficient, resourceful Sardar was not going to be baffled by these difficulties. He offered the ministry to any Tom, Dick or Harry amongst the Muslim members, who

was prepared to sign the Congress pledge, and so the farce of Muslim representation was complete.

The procedure adopted was, of course, a negation of the constitutional safeguards for the Muslims, but it was also, less than fair to the Muslim League. Before the elections the Congress and Jinnah's Independent Party had closely collaborated with each other in the Central Legislative Assembly and many Congress resolutions against the Government succeeded only on account of Jinnah's support. Their relations during the elections were also friendly. Later, when after the elections in 1937, the Congress, at first, refused to accept office, and the Governors called the League leaders, as representing the next largest party, to form what were called Interim Ministries, Jinnah would not allow this. It is known that in some cases, the leaders of the Leugue parties in the provincial legislatures (*e.g.*, Sir Ali Mohammad Khan Dehlavi in Bombay) were quite willing - even keen—to become premiers but Jinnah overruled them. He would not profit by the Congress refusal to come in, or do anything, which might jeopardise the prospects of an effective League-Congress collaboration on which his heart was set.

The Congress party leaders, however, when it was their turn to be invited by the Governors, completely ignored the Muslim League. This must have hurt Jinnah ; what followed was calculated to rouse his ire still further. The Congress Government had taken one false step in taking, as Muslim Ministers, persons who did not command the confidence of the Muslims in the legislature. This false step was succeeded by many more of the same type. In the absence of a true Muslim representative in the Cabinet, the Congress Governments had nobody to advise them about the views of the Muslims, when they took decisions affecting the general population. The so-called "Muslim Minister" knew very well that he was governed by the Congress pledge, and the iron discipline of that party. He usually represented himself alone, and lacked that moral courage which comes from having "big battalions at one's back". In many cases, he was just a newcomer to the Congress ranks, avowedly for the sake of the office—and did not

carry with his colleagues in the Cabinet, anything of the influence, which a Syed Mahmud or Yaqub Hassan would carry. Bereft of any following, and any mission, that he was to watch the Muslim interests—and in many cases, even the support of a contented conscience—the Muslim Minister was a pathetic figure, and deprived of his frank advice, the Congress Governments took several steps, which caused deep resentment amongst the Muslims. When the Congress ministries resigned office in 1939, a "Day of Deliverance" was observed by the Muslims—as well as by Hindu untouchables—and a committee has reported on the hardships, to which Muslims were exposed under the Congress rule.

The second half of the year 1937 was one of the darkest periods through which Indian Muslims have had to pass since 1857. Their central political organization had failed to show any effectiveness at the polls. Over the greater part of the country, where the Congress ministries held sway, they felt that the Hindu Raj had come. They suddenly realised that all the fears, which Sir Syed and Viqar-ul-Mulk had expressed about their future, were coming true. They were most disheartened and sore at heart. They saw no way out of their predicament, and thought that soon the Congress, with its vast organization, and the policy of corrupting a few ambitious, un-principled Muslims, would extend its sway even over the Muslim majority provinces, and the whole country would become a vast prison-house for them.

The prospects for the Muslims were most gloomy, and many faint hearts began to suggest that they should settle with the Congress, on its own terms. There was, however, one light which burned bright and clear. Jinnah has been called a proud and haughty person, and this trait of character may have caused him and his people occasional difficulties. This was, however, the time when just these qualities were needed. In the midst of the storm he stood like a rock. He was the proud representative of a proud people, and he hurled defiance at the pretensions and the dreams of the Congress. He was not going to lower his flag to come to terms with the Congress. Far from his accepting conditions, while being offered seats in the Congress Governments, it would be he,

who would impose conditions!

Indian Muslims are not likely to forget the resolute stand which Jinnah, without any visible following, without much support in the legislatures, and inspired solely by his sense of duty and his faith in his people, took at this juncture. But there was another great Muslim who, although in the background, gave Jinnah powerful and effective moral support. Jinnah has written about Iqbal:

"To me, he was a friend, guide and philosopher, and during the darkest moments through which the Muslim League had to go, he stood like a rock and never flinched one single moment."

Gradually the darkness began to lift. The Muslims saw the light and rallied round. Those in the Muslim majority provinces saw what was happening to their co-religionists in the Congress provinces and were deeply touched. They now realised that except through a powerful, All-India organization, they had no means of saving themselves. So after having decisively defeated the League in the elections, the Muslim premiers of the Punjab, Bengal, and Sind, came to terms with Jinnah, and agreed to abide by the policy and decisions of All-India Muslim League in all-India matters.

These decisions which were announced at the annual session of the League, held at Lucknow, towards the end of 1937, not only opened a new chapter for the League but marked a turning point in the history of Muslim India. The session was held in the face of heavy odds but, thanks to the help of the young Raja of Mahmudabad, the arrangements were perfect. Jinnah, in his presidential address hurled defiance at the Congress, but now it was not the defiance of one who had nothing but faith and courage, to succour him. He had the premiers of the Punjab and Bengal on his right and left, and he knew that he had the support of almost every self-respecting Muslim. The Muslim India had rallied round the rallying-post!

SEARCH FOR SECURITY

The significance of the Lucknow session of the League was not lost on the Congress leaders. They realized that their treatment of the Muslims in the Congress provinces had been taken as a challenge by the entire Muslim India, which was prepared to meet it. The firm, disciplinarian policy of the iron dictator,—the Sardar—had given results, quite different from what he expected. Thinking Hindus began to criticise the want of statesmanship shown by the Congress leadership in dealing with the Muslims. Tairsee, president of Hindu Gymkhana of Bombay, criticised, in the columns of the *Bombay Chronicle*, the unstatesmanlike attitude which the Congress leadership had shown in refusing genuine representation to the Muslims in Congress Cabinets. Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar of the Punjab expressed the same view in a long letter to Mahatma Gandhi. Sir Chiman Lal Sitalvad criticised the unhappy development in the presidential address delivered in December 1937 at the Calcutta session of All-India Liberal Federation and contrasted the unwise rigidity shown by the Congress leaders with the statesmanship displayed by the Muslim premiers like Sir Sikandar Hayat.

The Congress leaders realized that they had blundered and appeared willing to take Muslim representatives in the Congress Cabinets on less exacting terms. Now it was Jinnah's turn to be firm and unbending. The numerous unity talks, which started between him and the Congress leaders, usually broke down on the question of the representative character of the Muslim League. His plea was that in 1916, when alone there was an agreement between Hindus and Muslims, the League had been taken as the sole and the authoritative representative of the Muslims, and the Congress should now acknowledge its position in the same way. This, the Congress considered incompatible with its claim of speaking on behalf of entire India, and the negotiations broke down. Perhaps the truth is that what had happened in 1937, had not only embittered Jinnah but had finally convinced him that there was no safety for the Muslims in the goodwill of the Congress or the Hindus. They must devise more drastic devices for their safety—

or—perish.

As soon as the re-organization of the Muslim League was complete after the Lucknow session, Jinnah took up the question of the determination of the Muslim objective, in order that their position under the future constitution might be safe. In the Provincial Muslim Conference held at Karachi in October 1938, a resolution was passed suggesting to the All-India Muslim League, that it should review the entire question of the future constitution for India, and suggest something which would secure the honourable status due to the Muslims. 'Sind resolution also suggested that Hindus and Muslims were separate nations." Accordingly, a sub-committee was appointed to examine the question, and its report was, in due course, considered by the working committee of the All-India Muslim League. The sub-committee recommended the creation of a separate Muslim state, as the only effective safeguard against the Muslims being submerged by the Hindus and permanently suffering the hardships of which they had had a foretaste in 1937.

The conclusions of the sub-committee were published in the press, but the Congress leaders ignored them. They were, however, shaken, when at its annual general session, held at Lahore in March 1940, the All-India Muslim League endorsed the recommendations of the sub-committee.

The League at this historic session adopted a resolution, which is generally known as the Lahore or the Pakistan Resolution. It laid down that in the future constitutional arrangements for the country, "the areas, in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India, should be grouped to constitute Independent States". The resolutionwa s moved by Fazl-ul-Haq, Chief Minister of Bengal, and supported by Muslim leaders from all provinces. It was passed unanimously and being confirmed next year, by incorporation within the constitution of the Muslim League, became the guiding star of the Muslim India.

Little did, those who spurned the Delhi proposals in 1928, or those who in 1937, treated the Muslims in a rigid, dictatorial manner, realize that they were sowing the wind and would reap a whirlwind!

THE STRUGGLE FOR PAKISTAN

After March 1940, Jinnah's course became clear. The Muslim League had adopted Pakistan as its goal, and he strove for its achievement with the same tenacity of purpose and single-mindedness, with which, some years earlier, he had pursued his dream of Hindu-Muslim unity. All his efforts after that day, his interviews, his speeches, his negotiations, and his strategic moves were inspired by one idea—to establish Pakistan.

To attain his object, he had to bring all the Muslims within his fold, and make them disciplined soldiers. This task was not so easy or simple. The vast majority of the Muslims felt attached to the League, but their loyalty was of emotional—if not a fragile—nature. Even in the case of old Leaguers this loyalty could be severely strained by personal whims or minor differences of opinion—to speak nothing of narrow self-interest. The majority of the Muslim members in the provincial legislatures were not originally elected on the League ticket, and though, after the Lucknow session, they had signed the League pledge, they thought lightly of their new obligations. Jinnah's first efforts were directed towards enforcement of party discipline, and though this, later, led to a rupture between the League and the Unionists in the Punjab, Jinnah directed his efforts wisely, and was eminently successful.

The first indication that the Indian Muslims were nearing their goal of a separate state, came in the beginning of 1942, when alarmed by the war situation in South-East Asia, the British Government made an effort to come to a settlement with the Indian political parties and Sir Stafford Cripps was sent with what is known as the Cripps Offer. The proposals brought by Sir Stafford Cripps provided for Indian independence after the war and con-

ceded the right of self-determination to the provincial units. As under the proposed arrangements provinces were free to remain within India or opt out of the Indian Union, the provinces where Muslims were in a majority could presumably form their own federation—*i.e.*, Pakistan—in due course. The offer, however, was rejected by the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League for different reasons, and was ultimately withdrawn.

Shortly after the failure of the Cripps Mission, the Indian National Congress launched a "Quit India" movement and the important Congress leaders were taken into custody. This was followed by a lull in the constitutional activities, which continued more or less till the end of the World War II. Shortly, however, before the cessation of the hostilities, Gandhi was released from the jail, ostensibly for health reasons, and he started negotiations with Jinnah on the basis of a limited right of self-determination in the Muslim-majority areas. As, however, Gandhi wanted to reserve Defence, Foreign Affairs, and even Commerce and Customs for the combined Government of India and Pakistan and insisted on the division of Bengal and Punjab, Jinnah did not accept this "mutilated and moth-eaten" Pakistan, and the negotiations had to be abandoned. An effort by the new Viceroy of India, Lord Wavell, to straighten out the constitutional problem at a conference called at Simla in June, 1945, failed to produce any better results.

In the meanwhile the war ended in Europe and as a result of general elections in Britain, the Socialist Party came to power with an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons. Many of the Socialist leaders knew the prominent Congress chiefs personally and had frequently expressed themselves in favour of Indian independence. The Labour Party, therefore, decided to push forward with the constitutional changes and as a preliminary measure ordered general elections in India. The Indian National Congress was claiming that it had the support of all sections of the Indian public, including the Muslims, while the Muslim League claimed that it represented an overwhelming majority of the Muslim community, and it was thought that the general elections

would give the political parties a good opportunity to establish their claims. The result of the elections was a signal victory for the All-India Muslim League. In the Central Assembly Muslim League won all the seats, which were to be filled entirely by Muslim votes and in Punjab, Bengal and Sind it secured the vast majority of Muslim seats. In N.W.F.P also the League polled more votes than the Indian National Congress, but owing to the presence in the provincial assembly of Hindu members, completely out of proportion to their population and certain other factors, it could not form a ministry in that province. Generally speaking, however, the Muslim League made good its claim to represent the Muslims.

After the elections, the newly elected Muslim legislators met at a Convention on 8, 9, 10, April 1946 at Delhi. The main resolution which was moved by Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy marked the final crystallization of the Muslim demand, and indicated the lines on which Pakistan actually came into existence in 1947. The Lahore Resolution of 1940 urged that contiguous Muslim majority areas in the North-West and East "should be grouped to constitute independent states." It spoke of states and not a state. Later, the Quaid-i-Azam is reported to have thought that this was a printing error, but there are other documents in which the expression 'states' occurs and some semi-authentic writings in which details of the two states are also given. Apparently, it was taken for granted that the independent states "will form units for Pakistan," as stated by the Quaid in reply to Mahatma Gandhi in September, 1944. By 1946 either the need to remove this confusion or printing error was felt, or public opinion had got ready for the idea of a single sovereign state comprising the zones in the north-east and the north-west. Steps to formalize the position were taken at the Convention, which resolved that "the zones comprising Bengal and Assam in the north-east and the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan in the north-west of India, namely, Pakistan zones, where the Muslims are in a dominant majority, be constituted into a sovereign independent State." Incidentally, it may be noticed that both the Lahore Resolution and the resolu-

tion at the Convention were moved by the Chief Ministers of Bengal. In the evolution of Pakistan there was no demand from any area to bring in any other area against its will, and the whole scheme grew voluntarily and gradually.

After these preliminaries were over, the Labour Government sent a Cabinet Mission consisting of three senior Ministers, *viz.*, A.V. Alexander, Sir Stafford Cripps and Lord Pethick-Lawrence to settle the Indian question on the spot. The All-India Muslim League, the Indian National Congress, and other parties placed their cases before the Mission. As the parties were unable to come to an agreement, the Cabinet Mission put forward its own solution, which was a sort of compromise between Congress and League points of view. Under the formula suggested by the Cabinet Mission, India was not to be partitioned and there was to be one Central Government to deal with Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications. The Muslim League demand was partially met by the formation of the provincial Groups and by providing that the Group Governments could deal with such subjects as were delegated to them by the provinces. Both the League and the Cengress originally accepted the Cabinet Mission plan, but the Congress acted in a manner which came as a surprise to many an impartial observer. It accepted the Cabinet Mission plan, but put forward its own interpretation of the terms of the plan and insisted that even the authors of the plan had no right to explain it, and the authoritative statements made by them at the time of the presentation of the plan, which alone were responsible for its acceptance by the League, would not hold good. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru gave an example of the way in which the Congress wished to interpret the terms of the plan by saying that the "Foreign Affairs" included not only foreign relations but foreign trade and even customs and currency questions. The Congress obviously aimed at nullifying the provisions regarding Grouping and wished to establish a strong centre, inspite of the clear statements made by the authors of the scheme. The Muslims, therefore, had to reconsider their position and at its session held in Bombay, on 27 July, 1946, when the important Muslim leaders

renounced their coveted titles and distinctions conferred on them by the British Government, the Council of the Muslim League unanimously adopted a resolution withdrawing its approval of the Cabinet Mission Plan.

The extraordinary behaviour of the Congress leaders with regard to the Cabinet Mission Plan had far-reaching results. Those who were in touch with the Quaid state that it was this behaviour which clinched the issue of Pakistan. He was equally angry with the Viceroy for not implementing his original proclamation of forming the Interim Government with the help of parties which genuinely accepted the long-term and short-term plans of the Cabinet Mission. The Bombay session of the council of Muslim League which withdrew approval of the Cabinet Mission Plan was marked by blunt, forthright speeches. The Muslim League which had hitherto followed strictly constitutional methods felt that it had to make domonstrations and may even have to resort to "direct action" which the Congress had frequently adopted to exhibit its strength and apply pressure. The Quaid publicly accused the Viceroy of double-crossing, and wrote to him on July 31 rejecting his offer to join the Executive Council. " Wavell then obtained the Secretary of State's permission to form a Government with the Congress alone in case the Muslim League refused to join it"[1] and on August 13, announcement to the effect that Nehru had accepted the Viceroy's invitation was made. This greatly heightened the mounting tension. Still, the Direct Action Day which the Muslim League had fixed for August 16 to observe *hartal* and hold meetings to enunciate its new policy passed off peacefully throughout the country except in Calcutta, where Hindus objected to the *hartal* organized by the League and clashes led to serious Hindu-Muslim riots resulting in heavy casualties to both communities. On 2 September 1946, Interim Government was formed at Delhi, with Nehru becoming Vice-President of the Viceroy's Executive Council. The Viceroy continued negotiations with the Quaid to persuade the League to enter

1. Majumdar, A. K., *The Advent of Independence*, p. 239.

the Interim Government. The published correspondence of the period shows that the Congress tried hard to keep the League out of the Government by suggesting various conditions, but on October 15 the Interim Government was reconstituted with the inclusion of 5 Muslim League nominees. The manner in which the Congress acted after the acceptance by the League of the Viceroy's invitation further increased bitterness. The Viceroy suggested that one of the three senior portfolios – External Affairs, Defence and Home Affairs – may be transferred to the League. Nehru did not wish to give up the External Affairs and threatened to resign on this issue.[1] Abul Kalam Azad in his memoirs, entitled *India Wins Freedom*, has revealed that Sardar Patel was "vehemently opposed" to the suggestion of giving Home Portfolio to the League, and it was decided to offer Finance in the belief "that the League would not be able to manage Finance and would have to decline the offer."[2] This had results quite different from what Patel had anticipated. After saying that the Viceroy was informed that the Congress would offer Finance to a nominee of Muslim League, Azad continues to say:

" When Lord Wavell conveyed this information to Mr. Jinnah, he said that he would give his reply the next day. Its eems that at first Mr. Jinnah was a little uncertain about the offer. He had decided to nominate Liaqat Ali as the chief representative of the League in the Cabinet, but he was doubtful if Liaqat could adequately handle Finance. Chaudhary Mohammed Ali of the Finance Department heard this news and he immediately contacted Mr. Jinnah. He told him that the offer of the Congress was a real windfall and marked a great victory for the League. He had never expected that Congress would agree to hand over Finance to the Muslim League. With the control of the Department of Finance, the League would have a say in every Department of Government. He assured Mr. Jinnah that he need have no fears. He would give every help to Mr. Liaqat Ali and ensure that

1. Brecher, *Nehru, A Political Biography*, p. 324.
2. Abul Kalam Azad, *op. cit.*, p 167.

he discharged his duties effectively. Jinnah then accepted the proposal and accordingly Liaquat Ali became the Member for Finance. Congress soon realized that it had committed a great blunder in handing over Finance to the Muslim League . . . The Finance Member could interfere in every Department and dictate policy. When Liaquat Ali becamet he Finance Member, he obtained possession of the key of Government. Every proposal of every Department was subject to scrutiny by his Department. In addition, he had the power of veto. Not a Chaprasi could be appointed in any Department without the sanction of his Department." [1]

The British Government made one more effort to save the Mission scheme and preserve the unity of India. In December 1946, the British Premier invited the Viceroy of India, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan, Jawahar Lal Nehru and Baldev Singh to London, and tried to straighten out the issue.

As the Indian leaders could not come to an agreement, the British Government after consulting their legal experts issued a statement which fully bore out the interpretation placed by the Muslim League on the terms of the Cabinet Mission Plan. The Working Committee of the Indian National Congress accepted this statement but again twisted its meaning in such a way as to nullify its effect, and it became obvious, even to the Labour Government, that the Congress had no desire to implement the Cabinet Mission Plan on the lines on which it was drafted, The British Premier, therefore, made a statement in the House of Commons on 20 February, 1947, in which it was stated that the British would quit India by June 1948 and would decide at that time whether to hand over power to one Central Government or more, or to individual provinces in certain areas.

1. Khaliquz-zaman has stated on p. 370 of his *Pathway to Pakistan* : "The Finance portfolio had been offered to us but there was great hesitation in the beginning as to whether the Nawabzada would be able to deal with this very technical subject until having been assured by Choudhri Mohammad Ali of all help to him in the discharge of his duties as Finance Member, the Nawabzada accepted."

This, of course, was the end of the Cabinet Mission Plan and made it fairly obvious that the British Government would agree to hand over power to more than one successor Governments. The Congress, however, true to the technique, which it had consistently followed since its so-called acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan, refused to accept this interpretation and continued its opposition to the partition of the country and the creation of a separate Muslim state.

Another complication existed with regard to the provincial Government in the key province of the Punjab. Sind and Bengal were now under League Governments, but in the Punjab the Government in power was a coalition of Congress, Akali Sikhs, and about half a dozen Muslim Unionists. Punjab was a province in which Muslims formed more than 57 per cent of the provincial population but as the Sikhs who were 13 per cent had been given 20 per cent of the seats in the legislature, largely at the expense of the Muslims, it was possible for the so-called Coalition Government to have majority of one or two in the provincial Assembly. Of course the Government did not command the confidence of the majority of the population (as more than 90 per cent of the Muslim members were Muslim Leaguers) and was able to function only on the strength of executive action and the police force. Public meetings were banned all over the province and the population was given no opportunity to express itself. The Government was conscious of its weak position, and the ruling power was concentrated in the hands of the Governor and the senior members of the services, who were almost all Englishmen. The extent to which the provincial ministers mattered in this so-called popular government may be judged by the fact that at a time when the Premier, who was also in charge of the portfolio of Law and Order, was away on a visit to Delhi, in his absence the Home Secretary—quite a junior member of the Indian Civil Service—and the Inspector General of Police issued orders banning Muslim National Guards, who were volunteers of the Muslim League, like the volunteers corps attached to the Indian National Congress. This proved to be a singularly unwise step and released the forces which, within six weeks, ended the farce of the Coali-

tion Government. Muslim leaders in the Punjab refused to carry out the orders for disbandment of Muslim National Guards, for which no explanation whatsoever had been given. The Premier, also on his return realized the justice of their stand and orders relating to the Muslim National Guards were hastily withdrawn. Public opinion had, however, been considerably excited by this time and insisted that there should be a complete restoration of civil liberties denied to the general public under the Khizr Government. A peaceful, non-violent civil disobedience movement started against the prohibitive orders and for 34 days the Muslim Punjab gave a demonstration of courage, discipline, self-sacrifice, and a capacity to peacefully put up with arbitrary use of brute force, for which it would be hard to find a parallel even in the several Satyagraha campaigns conducted under the trained leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Muslim women were in the vanguard of the struggle. It became quite a common sight in Lahore to see aged women in *burqas* and the Muslim ladies belonging to the noblest families, who had always been in purdah joining silent, peaceful processions (one of which was led by Lady Hidayatullah, the Sind premier's wife) or attending women's meetings and thus contravening the prohibitive orders regarding public meetings and processions. The police and the bureaucracy acted with all the ruthlessness of which the Punjab bureaucracy of Khizr's days was capable. Most respectable women would be taken in police vans and left 10 or 15 miles outside Lahore to find their way back to the city. Those who refused to obey orders were attacked with tear-gas and in one case, Lady Feroz Khan Noon (the European wife of a former Defence Minister of India) was tear-gassed in the police van, as a result of which she sustained burns and fainted, and was left on the road in that condition. The Muslim public, however, true to their pledge maintained peace in the face of all this and what is even more significant were able to keep the movement completely from any communal complications. During the course of the movement on one occasion, when a huge procession of about 50,000 was moving on the Temple Road, a brick came from the top of a Hindu house and hit a Muslim volunteer with fatal results. Here was an obvious opening for a communal riot but the people in

the procession displayed an exemplary discipline. The injured volunteer was immediately carried to the hospital and the procession quietly continued its course.

The Punjab authorities blacked out the news of what they were doing and apart from issuing amusing press communiques, which daily reassured the public outside the province that the situation was perfectly normal and the League movement had ceased to receive any support, very little news was allowed to trickle out of the province.[1] In the end, however, the Punjab Government realized that it could not carry on and came to terms with the Muslim League leader, under which the right of public meetings was generally conceded and most of the civil liberties restored. A few days after the successful termination of the civil disobedience movement, Sir Khizr Hayat, the Unionist Prime Minister, submitted the resignation of his Government and in the course of a public statement urged that in view of declaration of the British Premier, made on 20 February, 1947, with regard to the future constitutional arrangements for India, it was desirable that the Government in the Punjab should have the support of the Muslims in the Punjab, who after all constituted the majority, and promised to give his support to such a Government. The Governor, therefore, called upon Khan Iftikhar Husain Khan of Mamdot, the leader of the Muslim League Party to assist him in the formation of Government. This invitation was accepted by the League leader, who in a public statement assured Hindus, Sikhs and Scheduled Castes, of justice and protection at the hands of the Ministry he proposed to form, and appealed for their goodwill and co-operation. This, however, did not suit Hindu and Sikh leaders and they declared that far from giving any co-operation, they would never permit the Muslim League party to form a Government in the Punjab. Khizr Hayat resigned on March 2. Two days later, Master Tara Singh, the Sikh Leader ceremoniously

1. A complete account of this struggle is yet unwritten. Those who would like to know the general nature of the forces, against which the Muslim League was pitted in the Punjab and the measures adopted by the Unionists and the Punjab bureaucracy to secure success at the elections, would do well to read Sajjad Zaheer's "Light on League-Unionist Conflict".

unsheathed his sword on the doorsteps of the Punjab Legislative Assembly and declared: "The time has come when the might of sword alone shall rule. The Sikhs are ready. We have to bring the Muslims to their senses."[1] The Hindu leaders including Lala Bhim Sen Sachar, the Congress Minister in the Khizr Cabinet, expressed similar sentiments. The violent speeches were soon followed by action and processions were taken out at Lahore, which first clashed with the police and later started communal rioting. From Lahore the trouble spread to Amritsar, the citadel of Sikhism, and rioting and arson started on a scale hitherto unprecedented even in the tragic history of India. Actually this was not a sudden and spontaneous development. The Hindu and the Sikh plan was to prevent the Muslims, who constituted a clear majority of the population, from forming a Government at the cost even of the civil war. They had been collecting arms and ammunition. With these and other preparations they were more or less certain that the Muslims would be worsted in a physical showdown. In this connection it is interesting to read a despatch by the special correspondent of *the Hindustan Times* (edited by the son of Mahatma Gandhi) which was published three days after Sir Khizr Hayat's resignation. The despatch sums up the pros and cons of a violent struggle in the Punjab and clearly shows how powerful Congress newspapers were publicly carrying on propaganda in favour of a civil war, which they thought would benefit the Hindus and the Sikhs. It says:

"Sikhs are much better organized and much better armed than the Muslims. For some time now they have seen a civil war coming and they have been preparing for it. High British officials of the Punjab Government told me that if they had to face a similar movement (like that of the Muslim League against the Khizr Government) from the Sikhs, they would have four times more trouble. If any such movement began, it would develop quickly into communal rioting...

"Since the day the Sikhs saw a civil war coming, they have

1. *The Pakistan Times*, March 15, 1947, etc.

begun to think of the Sikh States in the Punjab as a counteracting factor against Muslim fanaticism. Attempts are being made to organise the Sikh States into a federation led by the premier Sikh State of Patiala.

"This has met with encouraging response. Those rulers who were not orthodox Sikhs, have agreed to be converted to the orthodox Sikh faith and the ten-year-old son of the Maharaja of Kapurthala took the *Amrit* recently at a spectacular ceremony attended by leading Akali leaders.

"So when the rival claims of communities in the Punjab are submitted to the arbitrament of force, the Sikhs will also have the powerful support of the Rashtriya Sewak Sangh which has also been preparing for defence of Hindu rights." [1]

So the civil war in the Punjab, which was coolly considered and carefully planned by the Hindu and Sikh leaders commenced. The Congress leaders awaited its results with interest. For a long time they had hoped that Sir Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana would continue to oblige them and keep pulling out their chestnuts. Sir Khizr Hayat proved a broken reed. Now they depended on the valiant Sikhs to stop Muslims from gaining ascendency in the Punjab and making Pakistan a reality. The civil war started and soon the centre of gravity shifted from Lahore to Amritsar, the citadel of Sikhism, but here the Hindu and the Sikh leaders were in for a surprise. At this time Sir Evan Jenkins, the Governor of the Punjab, had taken over the administration of the province in his own hands. Sir Evan had shown a distinct tenderness for the wishes of the Hindus and the Sikhs by refusing to accept the offer of Khan Iftikhar Husain Khan of Momdot to form a Government (although he now had a clear majority in the legislature) but under the comparatively neutral rule of the British Governor the Sikhs did not have those advantages which they secured in East Punjab after 15 of August, 1947. The Hindus and the Sikhs were fully prepared but without the advantage of police and

1. *The Hindustan Times*, March 5, 1947.

military aid, which they secured subsequently, they could not make any headway against the Muslims. Even in Amritsar the Sikhs met with stubborn resistance from the Muslims and the myth of Sikh valour was shattered. In other places where Muslims were in a majority the Hindu and the Sikh losses were, of course, heavier, and the Congress leaders realized that Sikhs would be as ineffective in staving off Pakistan as Sir Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana. On 5 and 6 March, large-scale rioting and arson, which reduced half the city to shambles and which in fury and results can only be compared to a major battle, took place in Amritsar. The result was not what the special correspondent of *the Hindustan Times* had envisaged, and just three days later the Working Committee of the All-India National Congress, which was in session, passed a resolution demanding a divison of the Punjab and by implication agreeing to a division of India. The Congress leaders saw that the Sikhs could not keep Muslims from coming into power in the Punjab and decided to save what they could!

The demand for a division of a province sounded strange from a political party, which had all along resisted the division of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent, but by implied agreement to the partitioning of India, it provided a basis for discussions and agreement with the Muslim League. Soon thereafter Viscount Mountbatten came as Viceroy and started consultations with the leaders of various political parties. Ultimately, as a result of the agreement, to which Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru on behalf of the Congress, Muhammad Ali Jinnah on behalf of the Muslim League and Sardar Baldev Singh on behalf of Sikhs gave public expression through broadcasts on All India Radio, the Mountbatten Plan was announced on 3 June, 1947. Under this Plan steps were to be taken to ascertain the wishes of the representatives of Sind, West Punjab, N.W.F.P., East Bengal and the district of Sylhet in Assam, and as they all declared themselves in favour of a separate federation (Pakistan), the task of the division of the assets of Government of undivided India and determination of exact boundaries of the two Dominions was taken in hand.

Shortly after this, His Majesty accepted the proposal to appoint Muhammad Ali Jinnah as the first Governor-General of Pakistan, for the establishment of which nobody had worked harder or more skilfully and wisely. On 14 August Mountbatten arrived in Karachi to inaugurate the Pakistan Constituent Assembly and formally proclaimed some other decisions. On 15 August, 1947, Pakistan came into being as a separate self-governing Dominion.

The Quaid's assumption of Governor-Generalship has led to considerable criticism and many think that this step was wrong, or even motivated by personal vanity. There is no doubt that the decision hurt Mountbatten. Apart from other things, he considered it a step-down for himself to give up the viceroyalty of the entire sub-continent and become constitutional Governor-General of only a part. Mountbatten's likely reaction must have been before the League leadership, and it is known that their decision was not taken in haste. After a study of the available material on this subject, our own opinion is that the League's decision was the right one. Considering the state of the Quaid's health there was no question of his becoming the Prime Minister, as suggested by Mountbatten. On the other hand, Mountbatten's Governor-Generalship of Pakistan may have helped the new state in a few minor matters but a study of the sizable literature which has appeared on the developments of the period gives no ground for believing that he, as the joint Governor-General, would have been effective enough to be of help—or even able to safeguard's Pakistan's interests—in any important matter against the standpoint of the Indian leaders,[1] particularly Patel. Long

1. Ian Stephens, in *Pakistan* (pp. 175-176) has reproduced the two reasons underlying the League decision, as given to him by Chaudhri Muhammad Ali. The crucial reason was the question, as to "what would happen in the almost inevitable event, with relations between Congress and League so bitter, of the proposed Joint Governor-General being given conflicting advice by his two sets of Ministers, those in Karachi urging him one way, those in Delhi another". The question was not, as Stephens seems to suppose, one of "legal niceties" only. It reflected the League anxiety about safeguarding of Pakistan's interests by a common Governor-General in the inevitable event of their coming in clash with those of India. The fate of Field-Marshal Auchinleck, who stayed on to supervise

before the question of a joint Governor-General arose, a situation had developed under which Patel could secure any object on which he had set his heart. This was happening through various ways. Patel was, as Campbell-Johnson told Noel-Baker, "the effective Controller of the Congress Party" and had the invaluable support of the numerous, well-placed Hindu civil servants. He was also in charge of Information Ministry, and the way the *Hindustan Times* was used on several occasions to successfully apply pressure on the Viceroy can be seen from Campbell-Johnson's book. Even more important was the fact that Viceroy's Constitutional Adviser—V.P. Menon—who had come to have such a hold over Mountbatten[1] was, as Moon puts it, "Sardar Patel's right-hand man."[2] There was a regular Patel-Menon axis. Mosley gives an almost pathetic example of what can only be called Mountbatten's naivette in dealing with Patel, and shows that when the Viceroy was in great glee at having "cracked the shell" of that "hard nut," he was only implementing what Patel and Menon had discussed and settled beforehand!![3]

Menon's own book makes it clear that not only Mountbatten had built up a special relationship with the Indian leaders which was denied to the Quaid, but when Nehru opposed the plan which Mountbatten and his team had evolved after working for weeks, which he had sent to London for approval and which had been actually approved, Mountbatten had no hesitation in brushing it aside to meet Nehru's point of view. Ultimately the plan which was adopted and which is euphemistically called Mountbatten Plan was really the plan drawn up by Menon,—on the lines approved by Patel, many months earlier.

---

the division of military assets, but was forced by Government of India to quit, when he tried to hold the balance even, would show how real the fears of the League leaders were. The fair manner in which Mountbatten treated the Princes is another pointer to what was happening.

1. For illustration of the close relationship between Mountbatten and Menon see Campbell-Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 144, 146.

2. Moon, P., *Divide and Quit*, p. 174.

3. For details see Mosley, L., *The Last Days of the British Raj*. pp. 101-102.

Many other instances can be cited to show that when the Indian leaders thought fit to apply pressure, Mountbatten gave in. In July when Indian Independence Act had not yet been passed and the Government of India was still working under the Act of 1935, Nehru and Patel asked Mountbatten to throw out the League ministers. They had no legal basis for their demand but Mountbatten met their point of view by so reorganizing his government as to let Muslim League ministers deal only with the areas which would constitute Pakistan after 15 August, 1947.

Even apart from the "web"[1] which Patel had successfully woven round Mountbatten, the simple truth is that Mountbatten and the British Government were eager to retain India, the bigger of the two successor states, within the British Commonwealth and they would not take any measure which could jeopardise this major national goal.

While the Indian leaders, with the invaluable help of Menon, were in a position to get what they wanted, Mountbatten's Governor-Generalship of Pakistan would have circumscribed the autonomy of the new state. Those who met Mountbatten after the Partition say that what he had in mind was not two completely independent states, but two sovereign states joined through a Union. Even after the Partition he would trot out these ideas to influential Pakistanis who met him. A senior officer of the Finance Ministry of Pakistan visited Delhi as a member of a Pakistani delegation and was one of those who were taken to talk to the Governor-General after the banquet given by him to the delegates. Mountbatten started talking about a Customs Union for India and Pakistan, to which the officer replied. "Have any two countries formed a customs union, without having Joint Defence, and can there be Joint Defence between India and Pakistan with the present situation in Kashmir ?"

Campbell-Johnson gives some idea of what Mountbatten had at the back of his mind. "He has come round to the view today

1. Mosley, L., *The Last Days of the British Raj*, pp. 101-102.

that the Cabinet Mission Plan can somehow be resurrected in a new form and name. As originally presented, it was psychologically wrong. If the principle of two sovereign States could be accepted, union might be achieved through sovereignty."[1] Even after Partition, Menon who was Mountbatten's political mentor wrote in the *Statesman* of 20 October, 1947, suggesting that India and Pakistan should come together for three subjects of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications. It is true that the Quaid-i-Azam and later President Ayub offered Joint Defence to India, but such an offer from an independent state, which is fully organized and has built up its own institutions, is something quite different from a scheme put through by a joint Governor-General in a completely amorphous stage. Looking to the strength of different forces at Delhi there is no doubt that Pakistan's sovereignty would have been greatly diluted if it had started with Mountbatten as its Governor-General, and the League took the right decision. In fact, the proposal which the Quaid made and for which he has received insufficient credit reveals his great constructive statesmanship. He suggested that India and Pakistan should have their own Governors-General but there should be a common figure, a sort of Super Governor-General, for the brief transitional period. This was the only way in which the advantages of a common Governor-General could have been secured without imperilling or diluting Pakistan's sovereignty. The proposal was not accepted as Mountbatten stated (out of simple pique ?) that, "it would be quite impossible for himself to assume this supra-national role." Later, Lord Samuel, the Liberal Leader and experienced administrator made

1. Campbell-Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten*, p. 70. It is true that at this stage Mountbatten wanted "that the representatives of Pakistan and Hindustan should come together on the basis of parity" and said, "My object is to create the effect of the two sovereign states or separate blocks negotiating at the Centre rather than having a system of majority vote," (p. 71). This was not very different from "some sort of a treaty" of which Quaid spoke, but considering Mountbatten's handicaps and the transformation which many good ideas (*e.g.*, the Cabinet Mission Plan) had undergone at the hands of the Congress leaders, it would have been dangerous for the League to pursue such ideas with Mountbatten as the Governor-General of Pakistan.

practically the same suggestion—for "a viceroy presiding over the two Governors-General." [1] The wisdom of this proposal was presumably recognized, but the meeting of the British Prime Minister and the party leaders, which considered it, felt "that such a suggestion was now too late to put into practice, and in any case likely to be unacceptable to the Congress." [2] So the fault was not, after all, Quaid's!

It is true that Mountbatten felt hurt at the League decision. He seems to have been unaware of the extent to which he had forfeited the confidence of the Muslims. Even at the time of his appointment as Viceroy, Ismay "felt there was a danger of an issue being made of Mountbatten's selection as a pro-Hindu and anti-Muslim League appointment." [3] The subsequent developments confirmed this impression. By the middle of June, 1947, according to Field-Marshal Montgomery's impressions formed during a visit to Delhi, and recorded in his Memoirs, the Muslim League leaders felt that Mountbatten was in "Nehru's pocket." With this impression, it is difficult to see how a different course could have been followed.

THE HAPPENINGS IN EAST PUNJAB

When Jinnah (now generally known and addressed as Quaid-i-Azam,) agreed to become the Governor-General of Pakistan, some Muslims—particularly those left in India—felt unhappy. They thought that it would have been better and more in Jinnah's style, if he had stayed on in India to keep a watch over the welfare of the Indian Muslims, whose position was likely to deteriorate with the departure of a neutral power. They, however, underrated the problems of the new state and failed to realise that the Quaid-i-Azam was undertaking a very heavy burden and indeed making a great sacrifice in taking upon his shoulders the responsibility for seeing the new state fully on its feet. As Rushbrook Williams points out, the Quaid was, indeed, "making a final sacri-

1. Campbell-Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 132.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

fice of all real prospect of recovering his health to the cause with which he had identified himself."[1]

Never was a state which had evoked so much enthusiasm inaugurated in less propitious circumstances. The massacre of Muslims in the East Punjab had started even a few days before the inauguration of Pakistan and before the state had begun to function, it had to build up a machinery to receive and look after such vast number of refugees as no other state has ever had to deal with. The anguish and the dismay which events of East Punjab caused not only amongst those who were victims of some of the worst barbarities of the world history but amongst the entire Muslim population of Pakistan can be easily imagined.

The inhuman atrocities of East Punjab are something on which writers in Pakistan hate to dwell. For them the subject is too full of agony, partly on account of their kinship with the sufferers and partly on account of incredibly low depths to which human nature degraded itself. The West Punjab Government did, in the beginning, publish some material, compiled, according to general belief, by Professor A. S. Bokhari, providing data from Government records regarding the Sikh Plan, etc., but Quaid-i-Azam discouraged such efforts. In spite of the anguish which he himself felt and the strong feeling on this subject in Pakistan, particularly among officers from the Punjab, he took a statesmanlike attitude, and refused to look at the question, except from a broad, human point of view. At a speech broadcast from Lahore in October 1947 he expressed his reluctance "to apportion blame as to which community has disgraced itself more."[2] Four months later, he took the same high-minded, fair and statesmanlike view of the tragic development and said, "None of us, whether we be of Pakistan or of India, can speak of it without the deepest grief. Men, women and children have been massacred in their thousands—millions are homeless. The trouble once having started, the people on both sides have hit back at each other, and I would hope that

1. Rushbrook Williams, *The State of Pakistan*, p. 30.

2. Quaid-i-Azam, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, *Speeches as Governor-General of Pakistan, 1947-48*, p. 34.

they are ashamed of it." [1]

In India, however, considerable literature has appeared on the subject, from semi-official quarters. Even a person of the official eminence of V. P. Menon, has thought it fit to deal with the subject at some length, and attempt to obscure the issues. It appears, therefore, necessary to deal with the subject, and set the record straight.

V. P. Menon, after stating that the communal hostilities had ebbed with the acceptance by the political parties of the 3rd June Plan, goes on to say, "But soon after the announcement of Radcliff Award on 17th August a determined campaign to drive out the Hindus and Sikhs was evident all over West Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province. There were serious disturbances in Lahore, Sheikhupura, Sialkot and Gujranwala districts. A massacre of an unprecedented scale took place in Sheikhupura in West Punjab. This was followed by a violent anti-Muslim reaction in Amritsar."[2] Later, he says, "the holocaust in West Pakistan had its repercussions in East Punjab." [3]

1. Quaid-i-Azam, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, *Speeches as Governor-General of Pakistan, 1947-48*, p. 59.

2. Menon, V. P., *Transfer of Power in India*, p. 418.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 419. K. L. Panjabi, the biographer of Patel, builds on the foundation laid by Menon, but adds another storey. After mixing up the sequence of events like Menon, and linking, like G.D Khosla, the post-partition trouble with events at "Calcutta, Noakhali, Bihar, Lahore, Amritsar and Rawalpindi" (relating, really to March 1947, or earlier), he says, "In this explosive atmosphere a fresh spark was lighted by the Radcliff Award, defining the boundary between India and Pakistan and allotting Gurdaspur to India. Pakistan screamed that this was vile injustice perpetrated by a conspiracy between Radcliff and Mountbatten. 'Let us have our revenge,' said the mob. Widespread trouble broke out in West Punjab. Hindus and Sikhs fled from the villages to the cities but could find no protection. They were looted, tortured and killed like helpless sheep under the knife of a butcher. The news of these atrocities flashed to East Punjab where the Hindus reacted with equal ferocity." *vide* Panjabi, K. L., *The Indomitable Sardar*, p. 127.

Not only are these statements misleading[1] and made in complete disregard of the dates of disturbances at various places, but are calculated to obscure fairly simple reasons which led to the recrudescence of trouble in August, 1947. The fact that the Sikhs started their brutal operations in East Punjab, a good few days *before* "the announcement of the Radcliff Award on 17th August" is generally well-known and accepted by *all impartial* observers. Leonard Mosley, for example, says on *the basis* of the report of General Rees, as contained in the official *history* of the 4th Indian Division: "The Sikhs, as they had threatened (and as Delhi had been warned) had opened their campaign of violence in the second week of August."[2] Elsewhere, he quotes a report which Mountbatten received on 27th July and which gave "information—from a reliable source" to the effect "that the Sikhs intend to act on or about 7th August."[3] That this time-table was adhered to may be seen from Mosley's account of the murder on August 9, of four senior Muslim Army Officers and 150 Muslim officials, etc., on the train to Pakistan.[4] Attacks in rural areas of Amritsar district had started a few days earlier—about the 5th of August—as Eustace, the British District Magistrate of Lahore told Penderel Moon on August 15. "The recent recrudescence of trouble in Lahore was due to events in Amritsar district where, for the last ten days, armed gangs of Sikhs had

1. This is not the only instance of tendentious and misleading statements made by Menon. John Connel refers to his "biased and inaccurate" reasoning in another connection. (Connel, *Auchinleck*, p. 883). Penderel Moon gives an instance, in which Menon disowned a statement, which he had made in presence of Moon and other witnesses, as it did not suit Government of India. (See Footnote at p. 177 of *Divide and Quit*). Campbell-Johnson's book contains a gist of Menon's advice to Mountbatten on several points (*e.g.*, at p. 191) and his bias is easily visible. It is also worth noting that although at the end of 1946 or the beginning of 1947, this Constitutional Adviser to the Viceroy worked out arrangements with Patel destructive of the Cabinet Mission Plan, which then held the field officially, neither he nor Patel informed Nehru of this step. (See Connel, J., *op. cit.*, p. 883).

2. Mosley, L., *op. cit.*, p. 235.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 211.

4. *Ibid*, pp. 216-17.

been setting fire to Muslim villages and butchering the inhabitants."[1]

Leonard Mosley says that the Sikh killing was "both planned and at the same time blind and insensate." Apparently he has not understood the reasons underlying the Sikh fury. It was not "blind and insensate" in its basic aim. There was a method in the madness, and a purpose behind the atrocities. This has been made clear by a person exceptionally well-qualified to appreciate and understand the tragic course of events. Penderel Moon, the author of *Divide and Quit*, was a senior British member of the Indian Civil Service, who had held high posts in the Punjab (including the Secretaryship of Governor) prior to Partition, and was given even higher appointments after Independence by Government of India. No charge of pro-Pakistan or pro-Muslim bias can be laid against him. With regard to the Sikh point of view, he was particularly well-informed, as he had been the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, who, in the words of "a very senior British official" had to "regard himself as British ambassador to the Sikhs."[2] Moon mentions how he "had to try to establish friendly relations with Sikh political leaders and particularly with Master Tara Singh and other prominent Akalis ;"[3] and how, in this, he was assisted by his predecessor and by Major Short, who was so close to the Sikh leaders, includiug Baldev Singh. Moon's interest in the welfare of the Sikhs, and his friendship for them is well-known. In the section of his book dealing with the subject, he was not attempting to assess blame, but was only analysing whether the anticipation of the date originally fixed for Partition, *i.e.*, June 1948 by an earlier date, *viz.*, 15th August, 1947, was responsible for the massacres, which, as Attlee publicly stated, were not expected by the British Government. While dealing with this question, he incidentally explains the position regarding the disturbances and factors underlying them. After referring to the Sikh desire for revenge (presumably for the happenings around Rawalpindi in March 1947) "for which

1. Moon, P., *Divide and Quit*, p. 116.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
3. *Ibid.*

they had been long preparing," he goes on to say:

"But apart from these feelings of revenge there was another factor which would have made it impossible to prevent a violent explosion in the Punjab by mere postponement of its division till June 1948. This factor was none other than the determination of the Akali leaders to ensure the survival of the Sikhs as a compact, coherent, undivided community. In the situation which had developed by 1947 this basic objective of Sikh policy could only be realized by the forcible expulsion of Muslims from East Punjab; for only so could accommodation be found on the Indian side of the frontier for the two million Sikhs who would otherwise be left in Pakistan. So in falling upon the Muslims in East Punjab *vi et armis* in August 1947 the Sikhs were not only gratifying their desire for ravenge but also helping to secure a more rational objective—the integral survival of the Sikh community. The migratory movements that were thus set going became, no doubt, largely spontaneous and instinctive, the natural product of fear and danger, but there ley behind them, as the original source of the initial impulse, this rational motivation. To grasp this is to grasp an important clue to the understanding of these events. The determination of the Sikhs to preserve their cohesion was the root cause of the violent exchange of populations which took place; and it must have operated with like effect even if the division of the Punjab had been put off for another year." [1]

No further comment is needed to refute Menon's thesis, but a reference to Mountbatten's own summing up of the situation may be made to show that what happened in East Punjab was not by way of reprisal, as V. P. Menon alleges, for "a determined campaign to drive out the Hindus and Sikhs" from "West Punjab" but was something which the Sikhs had planned much earlier. Campbell-Johnson, giving an account of what the Viceroy told two editors of Delhi on August 27, 1947, says, "Mountbatten then turned to a general accouut of what was happening in the

1. Moon, P., *op. cit.*, pp. 279-280.

Punjab. The Sikhs he said, had launched an attack just as Giani Kartar Singh and Tara Singh before the 3rd June had told him that they would."[1]

In driving out the Muslims from Amritsar and neighbouring districts, the Sikhs had a plan and a discernible purpose, but they had not seen far enough. They had not fully foreseen what the repercussions of these happenings would be on the other side of the border. When the refugees with their terrible tales of woes streamed into West Punjab, there were inevitable reprisals, and communal rioting flared out in full fury. But the Sikhs were not wholly unprepared for this. In West Punjab, they had moved from distant villages into carefully chosen and well-guarded strongholds in three areas—Sheikhupura, Montgomery and Lyallpur. The Sikh Plan was not only to carve out a compact Sikh area—a potential Khalsistan—in East Punjab, where "at least three-quarters of the Sikh population from West Punjab" could be brought, but also to hold on to their lands in colony districts of Montgomery and Lyallpur, and in Sheikhupura in which Nankana Sahib is located. On June 26, 1947, Tara Singh had told the Associated Press of India that "he was of the considered opinion that non-Muslims of the Western Punjab shall continue to stay on in their homes".[2] Considering the arrangements[3] which the Sikhs had made under the guidance of ex-soldiers and former I.N.A. officers,[4] the idea was not so fanciful. This part of the plan was, probably, upset by happenings at Sheikhupura, where on 25 and 26 August (*i.e.*, four-five days after the arrival there of Muslim refugees from East Punjab with

1. Campbell-Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-75.

2. Khosla, G. D., *Stern Reckoning*, p. 290.

3. As an example of elaborate arrangements made in Sikh villages in the Muslim areas, see the statement of Lambardar Sant Singh on pp. 158-59 of Khosla, G. D., *op. cit.*

4. In relation to happenings in East Punjab names of General Mohan Singh and Col. Niranjan Singh Gill were freely mentioned. The latter told Andrew Roth, a foreign correspondent, that a civil war to prevent the Muslim secession would have been preferable to acceptance of Partition. "The United States fought a civil war to prevent the secession of the South," he added.

"hysterical tales about their sufferings"[1] and promise of "early revenge" by local Muslims) there were heavy Hindu and Sikh casualties, and the Sikh leaders realised that they could not eat their cake and have it too—*i.e.* raise hell in East Punjab and live peacefully in the colony districts of West Punjab. A senior Sikh leader, therefore, visited West Punjab and told the Sikh colonists to pull out. Sikhs moved promptly from Montgomery to the adjacent Indian district of Ferozepur, but on September 5, Sir Francis Mudie, the Governor of West Punjab wrote, "There is little sign of three lakh Sikhs in Lyallpur moving, but in the end they too will have to go". Soon the decision to move them was also taken. The Muslim Deputy Commissioner of Lyallpur (Agha Abdul Hamid) who had spared no effort to protect the minorities was surprised by this decision, made known after Giani Kartar Singh's visit on 7 September, 1947. "*Hukum Hai*"—"These are the orders"—was all that he was told by the spokesman of those disillusioned but disciplined people, who "burnt their villages before leaving them and marched in thousands, in columns several miles long, carrying arms and engaging the Muslims on the way".

No useful purpose will be served by giving even an idea of the low, brutal and cowardly atrocities which were perpetrated in East Punjab—compared to which even the horrors of Belsan appear humane and civilised. Some indication of what happened has been given by foreign writers and correspondents. Ian Stephens has reproduced some accounts in his *Pakistan* (pp. 182-88), including a despatch from Ian Morrison, the correspondent of *Times*. In spite of its somewhat sensational title Dhanwantri's booklet, *Bleeding Punjab Warns*, will probably remain the most authentic, contemporary account from the pen of an Indian, of what happened in East Punjab,[2] while the letters of Abdul Ghani Dar, M.L.A., a

1. Khosla, G. D., *Stern Reckoning*, p. 128.

2. We failed to get confirmation of a statement he makes about an alleged post-Partition incident at Sialkot, and trustworthy observes have contested much of what G.D. Khosla has accepted, on the basis of the refugees' statements. Such statements were also recorded by an organization set up by West Punjab Government but have not been published. It is said that Prime Minister Nehru was opposed to the publication of the material used by G.D. Khosla.

Muslim congressman of Ludhiana (India) addressed to Mahatma Gandhi and other political leaders at Delhi are other historic documents of a similar nature. They have been reproduced at pages 304-310 of the Urdu biography of Maulana Habib-ur-Rahman of Ludhiana written by his son and published at Delhi in 1961.[1]

Penderel Moon has tried to pin the responsibility for happenings in the Punjab on Gandhi and Quaid. Of course, if these incidents are considered as a by product of the independence of India and attainment of Pakistan, the setwo revered leaders can be held responsible for all that was connected with it. This would, however, be grossly unfair and unrealistic. The responsibility for these happenings is on those who were in charge of the operations and failed to do their duty. Mountbatten's responsibility has been indirectly admitted by Mosley, who in his *The Last Days of the British Raj* refers to a number of occasions on which Mountbatten could have acted more courageously and conscientiously, but did not.[2] Too little notice, however, seems to have been take of the acts of omission and commission of the Governor and the British bureaucracy in the Punjab. Mountbatten, in particular, seems to have rated the Governor very high, and the fact that Sir Evan Jenkins was warning Delhi about the Sikh plan and the likely happenings—primarily, it appears, to get special terms for the Sikhs has created an impression that the massacres took place because his warnings were ignored. Very few people have bothered to examine what action he himself took or failed to take, to do his elementary duty. The capacity of the Punjab administration of those days to "keep people in their proper place" was well-known, and presumably it was this which impressed Mountbatten. He, however, was not aware of its traditional lack of vision and its inability to go beyond the beaten track, which made it a poor instrument for dealing with an abnormal situation. If the role of Sir Evan Jenkins is compared with that of Sir Frederick Burrows, the Governor of Bengal, the position becomes clearer. Burrows was new to the Indian conditions but he was a

1. Entitled *Rais-ul-Ahrar Maulana Habibur-Rahman Ludhianvi aur Jang-i-Azadi* by Aziz-ur-Rahman Ludhianvi.
2. Mosley, L., *op. cit.*, pp. 189, 215-16, 245-46.

gentleman. "Sir Frederick was determined that his last days in India (for he would be going home after 15 August) should not be disfigured by the murder and mayhem of the year before, and he was prepared to use every weapon at hand, moral as well as military, to prevent it." [1] The situation in Calcutta was as explosive as in the Punjab—indeed, for a long time Mountbatten and his staff "believed that the main troubles, if any, would come in Bengal" [2] but Burrows called Gandhi to his help, who with the assistance of Suhrawardy brought the situation completely under control. The contrast between the Punjab and Bengal was too obvious to escape Mountbatten's attention, and he wrote to Gandhi:

"In the Punjab we have 50,000 soldiers and large scale rioting on our hands. In Bengal our forces consist of one man, and there is no rioting. As a serving officer, as well as an administrator, may I be allowed to pay my tribute to the One-Man Boundary Force, not forgetting his Second-in-Command, Mr. Suhrawardy?" [3]

Mosley has regretted that "Gandhi went on to Calcutta but it was in the Punjab that he was really needed". It has, however, escaped him that while Burrows took a delegation "and pleaded with Gandhi to stay on in Calcutta for a time and throw a pot of water on the fire", the all-knowing, all-powerful Governor of the Punjab felt no need for such help!

It is, however, not only his failure to exhibit that touch of genius, which a God-fearing Englishman displayed in Calcutta, but his failure in his elementary duty of preservation of law and order, for which the Governor of Punjab must bear responsibility. He resisted the proposal to take action against Tara Singh in August, when full information about the Sikh plan was available—and he himself had been passing it on to Delhi. At that stage it may have been too late, but there can be no condonation of his earlier inaction, *e.g.*, when infuriated by the Governor's invitation to Khan of

1. Mosley, L., *op. cit.*, pp. 219 220.
2. *Ibid.* p. 203.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 225.

Mamdot to form a ministry, Tara Singh ceremoniously unsheathed the sword and hysterically preached violence. What happened on this occasion is worth recording fully. According to Penderel Moon, "the mere rumour of a League Ministry was sufficient to evoke demonstrations by the minority communities. The ban on processions was still in force, but in spite of this on March 4 Bhim Sen Sachar, the Finance Minister in the outgoing Khizar Government, feeling perhaps that non-Muslims should have as much liberty to defy law as the Muslims had enjoyed in the past weeks, led a procession to the Assembly Chamber in Lahore where he proclaimed to a vast assembled multitude : 'I, as a member of the Government, hereby declare that you have every right to take out processions'. The Sikh leader, Master Tara Singh, raised the slogan, *Pakistan Murdabad* and brandishing a sword shouted, *Raj karega khalsa,*[1] *Baqi rahe na koi.*" Already on February 28, Tara Singh had given a press interview to a representative of *New York Times*, in the course of which he said :

"I do not see how we can avoid civil war. There can be no settlement if the Muslims want to rule the Punjab. We cannot

1. Penderel Moon, *op. cit.*, p. 77. It seems to have escaped general notice that Sikhs had been making preparations for succeeding the British in the Punjab from an earlier date. A post-partition Urdu publication, *Sikh-Muslim Tarikh*, issued by Islamic Research Institute 2, Club Road, Lahore, reproduces (pp, 167-168) a statement of Master Tara Singh, which appeared in the Punjabi journal, *Panj Dariya* in December 1945 (*i.e.* 2 years before the partition). He said, "When in 1940, France was defeated by Germany, there was nervousness here ; people thought that the British too would be defeated. I also had this possibility before me . . . With this idea we used to discuss things amongst us. We organized Jathas, and made arrangements by which Sikhs could gather quickly at some places. In our plans Lahore occupied a special place. We felt that there would not be much difficulty in taking possession of the city of Amritsar, and made arrangements so that Jathas of Sikhs could simultaneously attack Lahore from all four directians." He added that absconding and armed murderers were being given shelter in the Sikh Gurdawaras so that "in case there was disorder in the country, these desperadoes may prove useful" and said, "The second charge against Akalis was of giving shelter to Sardar Harbans Singh, and it was correct, but its object was the same, *viz.*, to save Punjab from falling under Muslim domination." (Translated from Urdu.)

trust the Muslims under any circumstances. The Sikhs had the ability to keep the Muslims out of Eastern Punjab but why should we stop there. We shall drive them out of the Punjab entirely. The Sikhs have started to reorganize their own private volunteer army in response to the Muslim League month-old agitation against the Coalition Ministry of the Punjab in which the Sikhs are represented."[1]

In his speech on March 3 in the grounds of Kapurthala House, he was even more categorical:

"O Hindus and Sikhs! Be ready for self-destruction like the Japanese and the Nazis. Our motherland is calling for blood and we shall satiate the thirst of our mother with blood. By crushing Moghulistan we shall trample Pakistan. I have been feeling for many a day now that mischief has been brewing in the province and for that reason I started reorganizing the Akali Party. If we can snatch the Government from the Britishers, no one can stop us from snatching the Government from the Muslims. We have in our hold the legs and the limbs of the Muslim League and we shall break them. Disperse from here on the solemn affirmation that we shall not allow the League to exist. The world has always been ruled by minorities. The Muslims snatched the kingdom from the Hindus, and the Sikhs grabbed it from the hands of the Muslims, and the Sikhs ruled over the Muslims with their might and the Sikhs shall even now rule over them. We shall rule over them and will get the Government, fighting. I have sounded the bugle. Finish the Muslim League."[2]

The above extracts may appear too long, but as on 3 and 4 March a fire was started which developed into a huge conflagration and led to some of the greatest tragedies of human history, extensive quotations have been thought justified, to indicate its origin. They also refute the thesis built up by Khosla himself that

1. Gopal Das Khosla, *Stern Reckoning*, p. 100.
2. *Ibid.*

the happenings in the Punjab were a continuation of what took place in Calcutta, Noakhali and Bihar. The developments in the Punjab had no connection with them. They started as the Akali—and the Congress—leaders were not willing to permit the functioning of normal constitutional government, and give the leader of the Muslim League party a chance to form a government. Besides, Tara Singh's words leave no doubt that he wanted the future of the province to be put to what the *Hindustan Times* called "the arbitrament of force." Unlike the communal "riots" of Calcutta, Noakhali and Bihar, the developments in the Punjab started, plainly, as a "war of succession."

What was the role of Governor Jenkins at this juncture? He allowed Tara Singh to have his way as far as it was within his power, and "abandoned the negotiations with the Muslim League leader."[1] Jenkins took over the administration of the province under Section 93 of Government of India Act, but did not raise a little finger against the law-breakers and open advocates of bloodshed. It was this failure to nip the trouble in the bud which unleashed the forces of communal frenzy, and ultimately they became uncontrollable.

In a way the trouble lay deeper, and the British Governor's responsibility for creating in the Punjab an unreal and unfair situation, which could result only in an explosion, dates from an earlier period. The Sikhs and the Hindus became so furious at the "mere rumour" of the MuslimLe ague forming a ministry in the Punjab, because they had been used to a set of circumstances under which, through various subterfuges and with the blessings of the British Governor—, a Government which did not command the confidence of the Muslims had continued to hold office. The seeds of ultimate trouble were sown in 1946, when, in spite of a resounding victory at the polls, the Muslim League was kept out of the cabinet. According to Penderel Moon:

"Khizar and the Unionist Party suffered a crushing defeat

1. Khosla, G. D., *Stern Reckoning*, p. 101.

and the Muslim League emerged as the strongest single party with seventy-nine seats in a house of 175. But not having an absolute majority the League alone could not form a Ministry, and the extreme, uncompromising attitude which they had adopted during the elections precluded them for the time being from obtaining support from elsewhere. In the circumstances it was expected that the Governor would temporarily take over the administration under Section 93 of the Government of *India Act* until a stable Ministry could be formed. *With time, patience* and discreet promises of loaves and fishes the League would probably have succeeded in winning over a sufficient number of members to secure a majority. But a cardinal error was now made. Baldev Singh induced Khizar to head a Coalition Ministry supported by Congress Hindus, Akali Sikhs and his own nine Muslim followers. Khizar, by all accounts reluctantly and after much persuasion, agreed and the Governor, Sir Bertrand Glancy, passively accepted the arrangement." [1]

According to the Muslim League version, which will be given later, the Governor was not such a passive party but was the key figure in maintaining an administration under which the real power remained with the British bureaucracy. Moon does not subscribe to this view, but even he has to admit that "a cardinal error" had been committed and that "in view of Khizar's own hesitations a few words of discouragement from the Governor, who was known to be his well-wisher, must have turned the scale against it. But the words were not spoken. The Governor took the easy, strictly constitutional line of least resistance and left his successor, who took office a few weeks later, and the province at large to reap the consequences." [2]

Nawab of Mamdot, the leader of the Muslim League Party, gave an account of the Governor's part in keeping the Muslim League out of the cabinet at the Muslim Legislators' Convention held at Delhi in April 1946. His speech was in Urdu and the following is a translation of the relevant passage from an Urdu

1. Penderel Moon, *op. cit.*, p. 71. 2. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

account of the Convention, entitled *Tarikhi Faisla* edited by Abdul Wahid Qureshi and published at Delhi in July 1946 with an introduction by Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan. Tracing the course of events after the election of 1945-46, Nawab of Mamdot said:

"The first meeting of the Muslim League Party was held on 24 February, 1946, when office-bearers were elected. As this was the largest party (in the Assembly) it was incumbent on the Governor to call me as the leader of the party and invite me to form a government. He, however, did not do so . . . and waited till 1st March so that the Congress-Akali-Unionist Coalition may be formed and Malik Khizr Hayat Khan may be made the Prime Minister as the leader of the Coalition Party. On 1st March the Governor of Punjab called me and on his enquiry I informed him that if I were asked to form a ministry, I could do so. In spite of this he extended me no such invitation and waited for another week so that the Congress, Akali and Unionist parties may discuss the details and complete their arrangements. When he was assured that these details had been settled, he called me and enquired about the party position. I told him that in addition to the 78 members of the Muslim League Party, 12 other members of the Assembly had promised to support the Muslim League Ministry, and thus I had the support of 90 members. He, however, refused to accept this and stated that I had only the support of 78 members. The Governor also read out a letter written by two Hindu Jat members to the effect that owing to a misunderstanding they had agreed to support the Muslim League and were now withdrawing the offer of co-operation. I replied that even if these two members were ignored, I had 88 members of Assembly with me and commanded a majority, but Governor Glancy kept on insisting that Muslim League Party could depend only on its members and not on any other. Accordingly, I was sent away. This shows the extent to which the Governor of Punjab was a party to a conspiracy against the Muslim League. It is not the function of any Governor to send for members and obtain from them statements of the type referred to." [1] (Translated)

1. Abdul Wahid Qureshi, *Tarikhi Faisla*, pp. 246-48.

These developments took place in the spring of 1946, *i.e.*, a few weeks before Jenkins appeared on the scene. He had almost a year to set things right but failed to take any constructive, statesmanlike step. There were two reasons for this, which also contributed to the events in the Punjab. One was Jenkins' pro-Sikh attitude, and his complete lack of contact with anybody who could speak for the majority community in his charge. This is quite obvious from such portions of his despatches to Delhi as have seen the light of the day. He enjoyed the confidence of the Sikhs, but he never helped them to see the inevitable realities. He and even Moon have accused Quaid of not making sufficiently strenuous efforts to win over the Sikhs. This is contradicted by the account given by the Maharaja of Patiala, wherein Quaid's efforts have been described, but in a moment of revelation Moon himself has admitted that "if there was any possibility of agreement between the Akalis and the Muslim League, it was effectively destroyed when the League was excluded from power in the spring of 1946."[1] If there was any chance even after that date, it was destroyed on account of the impossible demands which Jenkins and other British officers encouraged the Sikhs to make. Even after the Plan of the Third June had been announced, this fair-minded administrator was asking the Muslims to hand over Montgomery district, where Muslims were in such overwhelming majority (nearly 70%) and which lay so far to the west of Lahore, to the Sikhs. He wrote to the Viceroy:

"I believe there is quite a lot in the claims of Sikhs and for that matter, of the other residents of the East Punjab for a share in the canal colonies of the West and the Ginanni's (*sic.*)[2] idea that Montgomery district should be allotted to the East is by no means as ridiculous as it sounds."[3]

Knowing fully that no Boundary Commission could possibly

1. Penderel Moon, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

2. This friend of the Sikhs, after thirty years' service in the Punjab could not correctly spell "Giani" or for the matter of that, "Kartar Singh", which he consistently spelt "Khartar Singh." (Vide Mosley, *op. cit.*, p. 205.)

3. Quoted in Mosley, L., *op. cit.*, p. 212.

allot Montgomery district to the Sikhs he beseeched Mountbatten to try to persuade the Muslims to allow this as a "gesture" !

Jenkins made this proposal at the end of July, *i.e.*, long after the scheme of Partition and the lines on which the boundaries were to be drawn had been approved, but it is quite likely that during the previous year the British bureaucrats in the Punjab could not make any constructive contribution to the problem of the province as they had their own plans for the future. They had completely cold-shouldered the League, and were really interested in maintaining a united Punjab, not for any reasons of altruism, but in order to keep it within the British Commonwealth. In George Abell they had an influential representative in Mountbatten's entourage. He was the Viceroy's Principal Private Secretary and the only officer in Mountbatten's secretariat with experience of Indian administration. It may be presumed that he played an important role in the evolution of the original plan which he and Ismay took to London and which was approved by the British Government. V. P. Menon in his *Transfer of Power in India* has dramatically revealed how Mountbatten showed it to Nehru who rejected it out of hand and how it was replaced by another scheme of Menon's drafting. Under the original scheme the provinces were to form successor states and although they could form a union, there was no provision for having successor Central Governments. The British bureaucracy which wanted the Punjab to be admitted to the British Commonwealth did not wish to release its hold over the province, and no normalization of the constitutional position took place, although, as pointed out by Brecher, under Khizr Hayat Khan "the constitutional government was virtually at a standstill because the coalition was uneasy and had a majority of only three. The legislature met only when it was essential to pass the budget." Actually in 1947 Khizr resigned on the eve of the Budget Session !

Ultimately the Sikhs were the worst sufferers from Sir Evan Jenkins's policy, but as things turned out, the plan of the British bureaucrats to keep a united Punjab safe for the British Commonwealth did not work. Even in the service of the Empire they

were showing their traditional, limited vision. Mountbatten and the Government in Britain were fighting for bigger stakes. They wanted the whole of the sub-continent to remain in the Commonwealth, and once this was assured they scrapped the scheme which Abell had taken to London for provincial successor states. In the meanwhile, incalculable damage had been done to the cause of provincial harmony and Jenkins was not the man to be able to stop the forces which had been let loose.

Dealing with the happenings in the Punjab, Lord Ismay remarked that "the giants of old like the Lawrences and John Nicholson, would probably have clapped the Sikh leaders into jail at once." [1] This would indicate what a top administrator felt about the stature of the men at the helm of affairs in the Punjab. It has already been stated that things had been allowed to drift too long but action against those actively indulging in illegal and criminal activities even at this stage would have been useful. It would have interfered with their elaborate plans, and made known the Government stand with regard to those indulging in and preparing for violence. It certainly would have restrained the members of the police force and state armies in East Punjab who played such an important and ugly role. In any case, Jenkins' reasons for taking no action against Tara Singh are most extraordinary. Mosley quotes him as observing, "What would have been the good of arresting the old rascal at the beginning of August, if in mid-August, when Independence came, he was set free ?" [2] This argument is, to say the least, irrelevant. What happened in mid-August was hardly the concern of Sir Evan. He and Mountbatten had a clear responsibility during the earlier period. Was that responsibility discharged ?

Apart from the irrelevance of Sir Evan's argument, the real tragedy was that—like the most British bureaucrats in the Punjab—he took a dim view of the capacity and sense of responsibility of the two governments which were taking over. Mosley has

1. Quoted by Ian Stephens, *Pakistan*, p. 173.
2. Mosley, L., *op., cit.*, p. 215.

rightly doubted the accuracy of his anticipation of what the native government would have done when Independence came. Writing about the plea that Tara Singh would have been set free in mid-August, Mosley remarks, "But would he in fact had been set free ? Nehru was as anxious as the Viceroy to see the transfer of power come about peacefully. He would (as he subsequently showed) have been more than willing to offend the Sikhs if, by sequestering their leaders, he averted a massacre." [1]

As Mosley points out, Nehru flung Tara Singh five times into jail in the next 10 years. If Sir Evan had done his duty, what is most likely is that Tara Singh would have remained a prisoner in the Lahore Fort until the exchange of prisoners between the two dominions many months later and after the situation had been brought under control. The fact that Nehru's Government with the enthusiastic co-operation of Gandhi—though not of Patel—and the Government of Pakistan as represented by Quaid and Liaquat were able to bring the situation under control in almost six weeks from the date of Partition and introduce some sort of order, while Jenkins and his Government failed to control the riots during the preceding six months is a sad commentary on the performance of the last British Governor.

With regard to the proposed action against Master Tara Singh it has to be remembered that not only was he preaching violence in general, but the Punjab police had got evidence of Hindu witnesses who had been provided with bombs and ammunition by him, and with whom he had discussed the plans of blowing up special trains from Delhi to Karachi, and his proposal to kill Quaid-i-Azam, during the state drive at Karachi on the Independence Day. The statements of two of these witnesses have now been published at Appendix I of *Note on the Sikh Plan*, isuued by the Government of West Punjab (Pakistan) in the beginning of 1948. Presumably they formed part of the material which was placed, according to Campbell-Johnson, by an officer of the Punjab Criminal Investigation Department before a "secret conclave" of "Patel, Jinnah

1. Mosley, L., *op. cit.*, pp. 215-16.

and Liaquat"[1] called by Mountbatten after the Partition Council meeting on 5 August, 1947. According to Campbell-Johnson, Quaid and Liaquat demanded the arrest of Tara Singh and other Sikh leaders, but Patel was strongly opposed to this course, while Mountbatten "was prepared to support the arrests, but only if the authorities on the spot felt that this would be a wise step." One Pakistani version of these deliberations is slightly different. According to this (unpublished) version Mountbatten *himself* suggested the arrests, and had in fact called the small, top-level meeting to discuss the proposal, but when Patel objected (and raised doubts about the accuracy of the reports) Mountbatten postponed action with the results that are known.

The responsibility of Governors Glancy and Jenkins for acts of omission and commission was general and in the domain of policy. More definite and more damaging are the allegations against certain British officers. On 26 August, 1947, Dhanwantri, who has been described as "a reliable Indian social worker" [2] left Amritsar for Delhi in the company of Baba Gurmukh Singh to acquaint Pandit Nehru and others with what was going on in the Punjab. The account which he gave to the Indian Prime Minister was later amplified in the form of a booklet, *Bleeding Punjab Warns*. Unluckily a copy of the original pamphlet is not available in Pakistan, but we have before us an Urdu translation which appeared at Hyderabad, Deccan under the title, *Punjab ki Khuni Dastan*, and is a most revealing document. Dhanwantri underlines the fact that violence was at its worst in five districts of Lahore, Multan, Rawalpindi, Amritsar and Jullundur which had British Deputy Commissioners and the attitude of the District officers was most unhelpful.[3] He relates, for example, that when information regarding the massacre of Muslims in Chauk Paragdas, Amritsar, at the hands of the Sikhs reached Rawalpindi, feelings amongst local Muslims were greatly inflamed. A deputa-

1. Campbell-Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 149. Curiously enough, Nehru's name is not mentioned among the participants.

2. Karaka, D. F., *Betrayal in India*, p. 64.

3. *Punjab ki Khuni Dastan*, p. 7. Deputy Commissioner of Sheikhupura (C. H. Disney) and Superintendent of Police, were Anglo-Indians.

tion representing Muslim League and other organizations approached the British Deputy Commissioner and represented that trouble was anticipated and precautionary measures should be taken. He gave a vague reply. Next day stabbing started and these representatives again met the District Magistrate. They urged that effective measures should be taken, as otherwise rioting would spread to the rural areas. The Deputy Commissioner assured them that necessary steps were being taken. When, within a few days, large-scale violence and incediarism started in the countryside, the Congress leaders of Rawalpindi approached the officer and begged him to take measures for protecting the minorities. His reply was, "Go to Sardar Patel and Nehru. It is their Government now. When you wish to send away the British, with what face do you come to us for help?"[1] (Re-translated from Urdu.) Even worse than this brutal cynicism of the British Deputy Commissioner—C. L. Coate, O.B.E., I.C.S.—was his failure to take preventive measures when he was warned and to initiate effective action when the trouble brokeo ut. Penderel Moon has also observed that while "Multan authorities acted vigorously" and by prompt despatch of troops quickly brought the trouble under control, the position was different in Rawalpindi, where "it was more than a week before large-scale use of troops began to effect an improvement." He also records that although in Amritsar two principal bazars were burnt to the ground and there was looting in practically every part of the city, "not a shot was fired by the police while this destruction was in progress."[2] It is to be noted that British officers were in charge of Amritsar and Rawalpindi, the province was being administered directly under Governor Jenkins and the events and administrative inaction relate to early March, *i.e.*, full 5 months before the transfer of power.

The attitude of the Deputy Commissioner of Rawalpindi had very ugly and serious consequences. In this district the Sikhs

1. *Punjab ki Khuni Dastan*, p. 8.
2. Moon, P. *op., cit.*, p. 72.

were the moneylenders and shopkeeprs in villages, but did not perform their functions with that outward humility which their Hindu counterparts displayed in other areas. Their operations had led to the dispossession of many Muslim landowners and relations between the two communities were strained. Now came the news of the massacre of Muslims in Chauk Paragdas at the hands of the Sikhs of Amritsar. The resultant reaction was wild. Not only was there a destruction of Hindu and Sikh property at Murree and elsewhere, but there were violent reprisals against the Sikhs in which "Pathans from across the Indus" [1] joined. Many Sikhs lost their lives, and some were subjected to personal indignity, including, it was alleged, the shaving of their heads and beards. Some may, themselves, have cut their beards to conceal their identity, and save their lives.[2] When the survivors were evacuated and reached Amritser, there was widespread bitterness. It also gave a handle to those who were even otherwise planning to seize power on the departure of the British. "Revenge Rawalpindi" became the battlecry of Master Tara Singh. As Dhanwantri points out, Sikh sufferers from Rawalpindi were taken from Gurudawara to Gurudawara, and *Shaheedi Jathas* (Suicide Squads) were formed in every Sikh village, in readiness for the day of vengeance. The vast camp organized in Patiala State for refugees from Rawalpindi became the centre of anti-Muslim preparations. Thus the trouble at Rawalpindi to which the British Deputy Commissioner contributed by his inaction, cynicism and general administrative failure, became an important link in the chain of disturbances which enveloped the Punjab.

Dhanwantri quotes the remarks of Macdonald, one of the policy-makers of the Punjab Government, for whom he has the

1. Spain, J. W., *The Pathan Borderland*, p. 197.

2. Khosla records instances of this happening elsewhere. He relates with regard to Jaranwala, where trouble broke out on September 8, "The next morning the Muslims announced that the Sikhs would not be allowed to live in Jaranwala. On hearing this many Sikhs had their beards cut as they believed that a Hindu appearance would ensure their safety." Khosla, G. D., *op. cit.*, p. 167.

severest condemnation. When some Hindu and Sikh leaders approached Macdonald for prompt relief to Hindu refugees, his reply was: "Do not worry. They will readily forget their troubles when they will see their co-religionists taking revenge from Muslims in central and eastern Punjab."[1] (Re-translated from Urdu.)

So far as the responsibility of some British officers for happenings in the Punjab is concerned, it may be relevant to reproduce the analysis of D.F. Karaka, former President of Oxford University Union and a prominent Indian journalist. He had toured the area at the invitation of the Indian army at the height of disturbances, and the following quotation is from his subsequent book, *Betrayal in India*:

"While Britain honoured its pledges on August 15, 1947, and gave to my country its freedom, the fact remained that many of those Englishmen who were left behind to carry out the details of the transfer of power did not share that enthusiasm of His Majesty's government or of the British people over the decision to quit India.

"They rather begrudged it.

"They resented that this country, which had been their preserve for over 150 years, should be handed over lock, stock and barrel to the 'natives.' After being the overlords in India they resented having to fade into insignificance in some English suburb.

"One can only judge individual guilt in retrospect. But, even now, those who viewed the Punjab closely are conscious of the part played by some of the civilian officials and military officers in allowing the situation to develop as it did."[2]

Same is the analysis of the American biographer of General

1. *Punjab ki Khuni Dastan*, pp. 8-9.
2. Karaka, D. F., *Betrayal in India*, pp. 47-48.

Thimayya and presumably of the General himself:

"It now became more obvious that some British officers were indifferent to the fate of the two new countries and were making no serious attempt to improve the situation. At the higher levels, British officers and officials accepted the policy of handing over the two countries to their new governments in a peaceful condition. Some junior officers, however, presumably wanted conditions to worsen to show the world that the sub-continent could not exist without British power. [1]

In his analysis of the tragic happenings in the Punjab, Penderel Moon has also overlooked a basic step which greatly facilitated them and which really made the exchange of population between East and West Punjab inevitable. This was the permission given to officers to "opt" on a communal and not on a territorial basis. Quaid, true to his legal and constitutional approach, pressed for a territorial division of services, but Patel who as Home Minister was directly connected with the question of services insisted that officers of higher services and employees of the Central Government—*e.g.*, Railways, Post and Telegraphs—should be able to opt on a communal basis. This meant that after the 15th August or soon thereafter no senior Hindu officer or Hindu employee of the Central Government was to be left in West Punjab and the same would be the position with regard to Muslim officials in East Punjab. A Hindu daily of Lahore wrote an editorial at this time, trying to make the leaders at Delhi realize the consequences of this decision. The editor pointed out that according to this decision, if a Hindu travelled from Rawalpindi to Lahore he would come across no Hindu officer, no Hindu railwayman, no Hindu policeman and probably no Hindu providing water or meals on the train! The decision really cut the ground from under the feet of the minorities. The problem was further aggravated when in East Punjab the Muslim policemen were disarmed. Ian Stephens considers the disarming of the Muslim policemen in Amritsar District on the

1. Humphrey Evans, *Thimayya of India—A Soldier's Life*, p. 250.

10 of August by the Hindu Deputy Commissioner-designate as a crucial factor in deterioration of the situation,[1] but what was happening was on a much bigger scale and owing to the insistence of the mighty Sardar. Writing about the Congress leaders, Penderel Moon has stated, "In retrospect it seems as though a curse was laid on them at this time which compelled them over the next ten years invariably to act in such a way as to bring about exactly the opposite result to that which they intended. They passionately desired to preserve the unity of India. They consistently acted so as to make its partition certain." [2] Ian Stephens refers to Nehru's speech on 10 July, 1946, regarding "Grouping" and the powers of Constituent Assembly as an illustration of the truth of Moon's remarks. Actually many more instances could be found from the life of the strong man Patel, who—unwittingly—contributed even more to the partitioning of the sub-continent and consolidation of this division. Far-reaching results of his refusal to give up the Home portfolio and his offer of the Finance portfolio to the Muslim League in the belief that the Muslim minister would not be able to cope with the responsibilities of Finance have been described elsewhere. Even more important were the consequences of his insistence on communal option to Government servants. When the Quaid and the League leaders pressed for giving Government servants option on a territorial basis, *i.e.*, confining their choice to the dominion within which their native place was situated; Patel retorted that there were Government servants who had conscientious objection to serving Pakistan and he would not be a party to their compulsion. He believed that by withdrawing the experienced Hindu officers the administration of Pakistan —which he was convinced would be short-lived—would crumble down quickly. This did not happen, but minorities were left

1. Ian Stephens, *Pakistan* (1st Edn.), p. 183. After this the lives of the Muslim policemen were in danger, and in any case, they could give no help in maintaining law and order. Many of them must have taken early steps to escape to Pakistan. Judge Khosla blames them for throwing the machinery for law and order "completely out of gear by large-scale desertions" (*op. cit.*, p. 278).

2. Penderel Moon, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

unprotected and developments took place, which "brought about exactly the opposite result" to what Patel had intended.

There is no doubt that Patel and his advisers made a serious miscalculation regarding the prospects of Pakistan. Brecher says that "in the atmosphere of tension, of fears and of hopes which pervaded India throughout 1947, there was a widespread belief that Partition would be short-lived."[1] The earliest prominent advocate of this point of view, as of acceptance of division of India by Congress on the basis of division of Punjab and Bengal, was Sardar Patel. Kanji Dawarkadas has published an important letter addressed to him by Patel on March 4, 1947, *i.e.*, before the arrival of Mountbatten in India. In it, after pointing out that the Muslim League "could not have Punjab as a whole or Bengal without civil war," he said, "I do not think that the British Government will agree to division. In the end they will see the wisdom of handing over the reins of Government to the strongest party. Even if they do not do so, they will not help the minority in securing or maintaining division, and a strong centre with the whole of India, except Eastern Bengal and a part of the Punjab, Sind and Baluchistan, enjoying full autonomy under that centre, will be so powerful that the remaining portions will eventually come in."[2] Even in the offensive statement which Patel issued in reply in Quaid's conciliatory message on his departure for Pakistan and which Mosley calls "a bucket of water" in Quaid's face, he said, "As for the Muslims they have their roots, their sacred places and their centres here. I do not know what they can possibly do in Pakistan. It will not be long before they return to us."[3]

With this assessment of the prospects of Pakistan, it is not surprising that Patel tried to ensure its collapse by depriving the new state of experienced administrators. According to original plans the Finance Secretary, and many other key officers of the Government of Pakistan would have been Hindus. Now they

1. Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 377.
2. "Sunday Standard" (Bombay), 26 April, 1959.
3. Mosley, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

were given general option and all opted for India.

What Moon has stated about the Congress leaders obtaining results opposite to what they intended[1] is another way of saying that they were found lacking in higher statesmanship. To some extent, their actions which brought about and strengthened Pakistan can be attributed to the fact that some of them—like Patel—were not desperately keen about the unity of the country if this involved sharing of power with true representatives of the Muslims. They were not well-informed about the Muslim viewpoint[2] and its sources of strength, but perhaps it is also true that with the exception of Mahatma Gandhi, who was kept out of the way when crucial decisions were being taken and later assassinated, the Congress had no statesman equal to the great issues confronting India. This failure of statesmanship has persisted after the Partition (and, perhaps, may be taken as a normal feature of Indian approach to Pakistan). When Partition came and for long thereafter, there were no custom barriers between India and Pakistan. Pakistan's currency was being handled by the Reserve Bank of India. There were no passports or visas, and if mutual relations had not been poisoned by anger, hatred, greed and hauteur, these links might well have continued. Government of India, however, acted in a manner which made the severance of these relations inevitable. In fact, it took the lead in severing many links. On the top of it came the trouble in Kashmir. "Thereafter," as pointed out by Menon, "events gravely affecting the relations between the two countries followed one another in quick succession. The result was further bitterness and

1. Moon, P., *op. cit.*, p. 14.

2. In spite of his many solid gifts, Sardar Patel was a man of amazingly narrow outlook. There is a well-known anecdote, giving his disdainful reference to Nehru's interest in foreign affairs. "Formosa? Let me see. Where is Formosa?" The statement, even if apocryphal is typical of the man. Patel was quite capable of saying, "Iqbal? Who is Iqbal?" In 1931 while presiding at the annual session of All-India National Congress, he said something, and proudly added, "The foregoing shows you how uninterested I am in many things that interest the intelligentsia." (Quoted by Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 392.)

estrangement." [1]

An analysis of happenings in the Punjab in 1947 and apportionment of responsibility for them is now of historical interest only. One thing is certain. Irrespective of whoever planned, countenanced and directly or indirectly contributed to the dreadful happenings in the East Punjab, they, more then anything else, led to the consolidation of Pakistan. These happenings revealed, even to the critics of the Quaid, the extent of hatred and barbarity which lay beneath the surface and convinced them that "amputation" was the only remedy. All Muslims were now convinced of the wisdom of Quaid's decision, and what is more they saw what grim alternative faced them. Not only did they close their ranks, but rose to the occasion, to meet the terrible challenge which confronted them. These happenings consolidated Pakistan in another way also. When the stream of refugees—naked, maimed, physically wrecked—with their horrible tales reached West Pakistan, there was inevitable reaction and exchange of population took place between East and West Punjab, under which West Punjab became solidly Muslim and East Punjab solidly Hindu-Sikh. If there was any slight chance of the reversal of Partition, this exchange of population (to which Patel readily agreed) had destroyed that chance for ever. The blood of the innocent sufferers and martyrs had not flown in vain. It had cemented Pakistan as nothing else could.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF PAKISTAN

The problems which Quaid-i-Azam had to face as Governor-General of Pakistan were not only due to the happenings in East Punjab and the need to receive and provide for millions of refugees.

What immensely increased the difficulties of the new state was the fact that it had yet to organise itself. A part of the Government records had been destroyed while in transit through

1. Menon., *op. cit.*, p. 442.

the Indian territory and the personnel for the new Government of Pakistan had yet to be assembled from various provinces of India and absorbed into a suitable instrument of administration. The difficulties which Government of India was raising in the way of Pakistan getting her agreed share of army equipment have been graphically described by Field-Marshal Auchinleck in a secret letter to London which has now been published by his biographer.[1] What was true of Pakistan was even more true of the key province of the West Punjab. The old province of the undivided Punjab had been in the throes of a civil war since the beginning of March 1947 and Sir Evan Jenkins' Government had totally failed to restore order in spite of draconian powers assumed by him.

On 11 August, *i.e.*, 4 days before the new West Punjab Government came into office, the Lahore correspondent of an Anglo-Indian newspaper wrote : "The truth is that today there is virtually no administration in the Punjab." A senior British officer, who had held high appointments in the Punjab was in Lahore on 15 August, and has recorded his impressions on seeing the situation : "I could not help reflecting that we were leaving Lahore in the same state of turmoil and disorder as we had found it almost a century earlier."[2]

Apart from the chaos in the West Punjab and general administrative difficulties, the state was faced with serious disorganization of communications. An unprecedented exchange of staff between India and Pakistan was taking place on the railways and in Post and Telegraph Department, and to this was added the dislocation in the railway system owing to acute shortage of coal.

Naturally all this had a very depressing and disturbing effect on the population, and amongst the factors which enabled the new state to grapple with the problems and build up an efficient system of administration, the presence of the Quaid at the helm of the affairs must be considered as one of the most important. He

1. John Connel, *Auchinleck*, pp. 920-24.
2. Penderel Moon, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

realized that the morale of the public was exceedingly low, and set about inspiring them with a new energy. His first step was to address the Government servants. On 11 October, 1947, Civil, Naval, Military and Air Force officers of the Pakistan Government were assembled in Khaliqdina Hall of Karachi, and the Quaid gave his calarion call. He started by mentioning the problems which the new state had to face and then turned to the happenings in the Punjab. He continued:

"The disorders in the Punjab have brought in their wake the colossal problem of the rehabilitation of millions of displaced persons. This is going to tax our energies and resources to the utmost extent. It has made the difficulties inherent in the building of a new state, I referred to earlier, manifold. Are we going to allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by the immensity of the task that is confronting us and let our new-born State founder under the cruel and dastardly blows struck by our enemies?

"This is a challenge to our very existence and if we are to survive as a nation and are to translate our dreams about Pakistan into reality, we shall have to grapple with the problem facing us with redoubled zeal and energy. Our masses are today disorganized and disheartened by the cataclysm that has befallen them. Their morale is exceedingly low and we shall have to do something to pull them out of the slough of despondency and galvanise them into activity. All this throws additional responsibility on Government servants to whom our people are looking for guidance." [1]

He sympathised with the Government servants, who had suffered bereavements and lost valuable property, and went on to say:

"But are all these sacrifices, that we have been called upon to make, to be in vain? Are we going to sit down and mope over our losses? If we do so, we shall be behaving just as our enemies

1. Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, *Speeches as Governor-General of Pakistan (1947-48)*, p. 23.

want us to behave. We shall be playing their game and will soon be suppliants for their mercy. The fitting response to the machinations of our enemies would be a grim determination to get down to the task of building our State on strong and firm foundations, a State which should be fit for our children to live in. This requires work, work and more work." [1]

Later that month he delivered another inspiring speech at a mammoth rally at Lahore, and addressed the nation on the radio. The result of these and other measures taken by the Quaid was that the drooping spirits revived. The Government servants, high and low, rose to the occasion and the nation was able to pull through.

The Quaid had spent all his life as a politician in the opposition camp and never had to shoulder the responsibilities of office. Now he was being tested in a new field and he did not fail. He remained steadfast in the face of calamities and was cool and unruffled in circumstances which would have been most trying for an old established state. In the face of gravest provocation—*e.g.* at Junagarh—he refused to be nettled and concentrated on one job of getting the new state on its feet. A very difficult situation was created by the Radcliff Award, which was particularly unpopular in the Punjab. Quaid faced the question with courage and on correct, constitutional lines. In a broadcast from Lahore he said about the Award, "It is an unjust, incomprehensible and even perverse Award. It may be wrong, unjust and perverse and it may not be a judicial but a political award, but we had agreed to abide by it and it is binding upon us. As honourable people we must abide by it." [2]

Luckily he was able to collect an efficient team to assist him. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, whom the Quaid had called his "right hand" in the days of struggle for Pakistan became the Prime Minister, and efforts were made to attract talent from all parts of

1. Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, *Speeches as Governor-General of Pakistan, (1947-48)*, p. 23,

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

the country. The new Government which had yet to complete the process of organization and consolidation of the state had naturally to proceed on cautious and even conservative lines but in certain important matters it embarked on a far-reaching change of policy, which was amply justified by events. One of the most important decisions which Quaid-i-Azam took was about the Pathan tribal areas in the north-west of Pakistan and the strength of forces to be maintained therein. He completely reversed the policy of maintaining large forces in Waziristan and other tribal areas, involving some of the biggest items of military expenditure of the old undivided Government of India. British experts doubted the wisdom of the new step and prophesied that the withdrawal of troops would be accompanied by large-scale attacks by the tribesmen and losses and casualties. Quaid-i-Azam, after carefully weighing the pros and cons (and in spite of the fears and objections of high military officers, who at this time were mainly British) decided to approach the question from an angle different from the one adopted by the British Government. Pakistan completely withdrew its forces from Razmak and other strategic points without any incident at all and with considerable increase in the tribal goodwill. This was the beginning of a "New Deal" for these areas, which has brought Pakistan high praise from thinkers and writers like the historian Arnold Toynbee.[1] Pakistan continued to pay subsidies to the tribal Maliks, and respect traditional arrangements in the tribal belt, but otherwise, it introduced a completely new policy. Instead of maintaining large forces and incurring heavy military expenditure, Pakistan concentrated on economic amelioration, spread of education, and medical relief, and earned rich dividends in goodwill.

The new Government gave proofs of wisdom and ability in tackling other questions also. India and Pakistanha ve plenty of very intricate common problems to solve and events after the

1. See Arnold J. Toynbee, *Between Oxus and Jumna*, pp. 153-59. His main conclusion after a study on the spot is, "Pakistan does pursue a forward policy on the frontier, and a vigorous one, but its key-instruments are not weapons of war; they are dispensaries, hospitals, schools, sports, and above all, economic developments," (p. 155.)

Partition have certainly not facilitated their solution. A big operation like the partition of a sub-continent must leave loose ends of great size and complexity. Quaid-i-Azam's Government, however, followed a policy of goodwill and friendliness towards India and the two Prime Ministers were able to establish friendly personal relations. Quaid-i-Azam in an interview with a Swiss journalist, himself offered to enter into arrangements for 'Joint Defence' with India. This policy of good neighbourliness was, however, followed without sacrifice of Pakistan's major interests and it is refreshing to recall one instance of courage and self-confidence displayed by the new Government. At the end of December 1947 the liquid financial resources of Pakistan were at their lowest. At the time of the Partition Pakistan had received 20 crores of rupees as an opening balance and its share of the undivided assets of the old Government of India was to be determined later. This share was subsequently fixed by mutual agreement at 75 crores and after deduction of the original 20 crores, was due to be paid in the latter half of December. The Government of India thought that it might benefit by the temporary difficulties of Pakistan and withheld payment of Pakistan's share until it agreed to accept a solution of Kashmir problem on lines which Pakistan did not consider fair or proper. Pakistan's needs at this moment were very pressing and there are plenty of instances in the world history when new governments (*e.g.*, U.S.S.R.) have agreed to such adjustments to gain the necessary breathing space. The Pakistan Government, however, cheerfully accepted the risk of losing, at least for the time being, its balance of 55 crores, but refused to do anything which would imperil the future of the Kashmir Muslims.

The Governor-General had very limited responsibility for administrative details, but Quaid-i-Azam was much more than a Governor-General. He was the Father of the Nation. He was the final arbiter in all national disputes, and so matters were referred to him, which would not concern an ordinary Governor-General. The part he played in such matters can best be illustrated by the outcome of the dispute regarding separation of Karachi from Sind. Sindhis in general, and Sind Government in particular, were opposed to the transfer of the administrative control

of Karachi, the capital of Pakistan, as wall as of Sind to the Centre. Sind Muslim League Party was opposed to the move, and even a threat of Direct Action was held out. There was a powerful agitation in the press, and there were frequent demonstrations in the streets of Karachi and elsewhere. Ultimately a deputation of representatives of Sind waited on Quaid-i-Azam, and once he gave his verdict in favour of the move, the whole agitation died down, as if by magic. Not a soul stirred, not a word of criticism appeared in the press, when control over Karachi, the capital of Sind Government, passed from Sind to Pakistan.

Apart from being the Governor-General, towards the end of his life, Quaid-i-Azam assumed responsibility for the newly created 'Ministry of States and Tribal Affairs'. His memorable achievement in this sphere was the smooth settling of the question of the accession of the huge border state of Kalat, which could have easily given more trouble to Pakistan than settlement of Hyderabad question brought to India. These pre-occupations naturally told on Quaid's health, which had never been robust. His life had been, in reality, a triumph of iron will and self-discipline over a fragile body, but the affairs and the anxieties of the infant state severely drained his energy. His colleagues tried to relieve him of all routine work, but he was so habituated to doing thoroughly everything he took in hand, that the efforts of his well-wishers were often of little avail. He would, for example, preside over the meetings of the Committee for Quaid-i-Azam Relief Fund for Refugee Rehabilitation for hours, and meticulously examine each item of subscription and expenditure. In June, he was compelled, under medical advice to leave Karachi, and stay at the higher altitude of Ziarat in Baluchistan. Here also files, deputations and Ministers followed him, and on 30 June he insisted on returning to Karachi to take part in the opening of the State Bank of Pakistan—the symbol of economic independence of the new Dominion. The strain of the journey and the prevailing heat of Karachi, however, adversely affected him and he had to return to Quetta, within forty-eight hours. Here he showed signs of improvement, but an attack of influenza and bronchitis resulted in a serious set-back, and led to complications. On 11

September, 1948 he was flown to Karachi in a sinking state, and passed away peacefully the same evening.

JINNAH, THE MAN AND THE STATESMAN

I

> "Let there be no mistake about it. One who wants to understand Jinnah must shed the popular prejudices against him." [1]

Quaid-i-Azam's superb qualities as a political leader are widely recognized. Justice has, however, not been done to him as a man. The grim struggle which he had to wage within a very limited time for the attainment of a near-impossible task left no room for leisurely diplomacy, and the fact that his objectives ran counter to the wishes and sentiments of the British, the Hindus, the nationalist Muslims and the Punjab Unionists was bound to influence their attitude. Even ordinary Muslims have not been much more successful at understanding this gaunt, lonely figure. Inevitably, they have recreated his image according to their own fancy, and forgotten that although in an effort to do his duty to his people, he created for them the largest Muslim state of the day, he was the product of a liberal, cosmopolitan atmosphere. From his early days he had worked with men like Dadabhoy Naoroji, Pheroze Shah Mehta and Gokhale, and although during the later years of his life, the world knew him only as a Muslim leader, he always remained a lofty-minded, noble-souled, far-seeing statesman. His place is not only among the makers of the modern Muslim world, but with the great statesmen of Asia, indeed the world.

About Quaid's basic personal qualities there is not much difference of opinion. He came from a business community, and was business-like, methodical and cool-headed. His integrity and incorruptibility have become a byword. From the beginning his

1. Sharma, M.S.M., *Peeps into Pakistan*, p. 1.

ambition was to be a "Muslim Gokhale," but he did not give himself up to politics, until he had made ample money from legal practice, and become financially independent. His courage—moral as well as physical—, strength of will and independence of outlook cannot but evoke admiration. Repeatedly his strong nerve was put to severe tests, but he always came out with flying colours. In 1943 he had to face an assassin armed with a dagger. He grappled with the man, and held him, till help became available. Four years later there was "a sudden but carefully planned eruption of Khaksars" at the Imperial Hotel, Delhi, where the All-India Muslim League Council was in session on the upper floor. With their *belchas* "they wrought the maximum of havoc in the minimum of time" and shouting "Get Jinnah" were half-way up the staircase leading to the room where Quaid and the Council were in session, when the National Guards intervened, and Khaksars were dispersed by the police with the help of tear-gas. Quaid "had no doubt but that the assault was an attempt on his life," but Campbell-Johnson who has narrated the incident, records, "Jinnah behaved with great composure." [1] Quaid's nerve was also tested in a less violent but, perhaps, more potent manner by Mountbatten.[2] He threatened Quaid that "failing agreement", power may be transferred to the Interim Government. Quaid remained "very calm" and gave a nonchalant answer. "Mountbatten felt that Jinnah's reaction was both abnormal and disturbing. It was certainly shrewd. The *ballon d'essai* has gone up and come down again, providing only the evidence that Jinnah has a very steady nerve." [3]

Quaid has been occasionally accused of showing lack of courtesy. Campbell-Johnson, for example, refers to his "hauteur and touchiness" on one occasion, and quotes Ismay about a communication addressed by him to Mountbatten, "It was a letter which I would not take from my king or send to a coolie." [4] Others have taken exception to some of his references to Mahatma Gandhi and Abul Kalam Azad. Those who have tried

1. Campbell-Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 115, 116.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 93. 3. *Ibid.*, p. 94. 4. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

to understand Quaid's mind, have, however, realized that his sharp reaction to certain individuals and on certain occasions was a part of his basic integrity and tendency to call a spade a spade. Lord Pethick-Lawrence's observations on this point give the clue to Quaid's behaviour. In the course of a speech at London in January 1959, he said, "Now he had, of course, immense powers of intellect and also of persuasive eloquence which he used with such effect that the idea, which was at first an ideal only, became in the end a reality. Not only had he those gifts but I realized in him a man of very firm resolution, a man who when he had made a promise always kept it,[1] and *if he felt that anybody else with whom he was negotiating failed to keep their promise he reacted strongly*."[2] [Italics ours]

While many of Quaid's basic personal qualities are recognized, the grim struggle in which he was engaged during the most important years of his life and the animosities which this struggle generated have obscured others. It is not, for example generally realized, that at heart he was intensely humane, intrinsically fair-minded, completely free from ill-will towards other communities, and large-hearted where this did not involve sacrifice of public interests. In order to instil a sense of discipline in the Muslim League he had to take drastic action against some of his lieute-

1. One hears occasional complaints that Pakistan did not come to the aid of Hyderabad at the time of Police Action. Of course, Quaid was not alive at that time. India waited for the news of his death before moving her troops, but the caution with which Quaid made promises can be seen even in this case. K.M. Munshi, who was India's Agent-General at Hyderabad at this time quotes Nawab Ali Yavar Jang's book, *Hyderabad in Retrospect*, to say that when in July 1947, Nawab of Chhatari asked the Quaid, whether Pakistan would "come to the help of Hyderabad if it was faced by an ultimatum from India ?" "No", said Mr. Jinnah as emphatically as ever, "Pakistan cannot help with material aid." (*vide* K.M. Munshi, *The End of an Era, Hyderabad Memories*, p. 54). Later, "when the Ittehad leaders talked of making preparations to fight India, he (Nawab of Chhatari) again approached Mr. Jinnah to inquire whether he could spare any arms for Hyderabad, 'Not a gun,' replied the Quaid-i-Azam," (*Ibid*, p. 55.)

2. Quoted in Jamil-ud-Din Ahmed's *Final Phase of Struggle for Pakistan*, p. 109.

nants, and he acquired the reputation of a stern disciplinarian, but all this was done in the public cause. Personally he was large-hearted and fair-minded. Of these qualities evidence comes from an unexpected source. It is well-known that the Quaid objected strongly to Sir Mirza Ismail's appointment as Prime Minister of Hyderabad. This led to a very unpleasant interview with the Nizam, but Sir Mirza says in his autobiography, "Even afterwards, when we were no longer on friendly terms, Jinnah expressed to several of my friends his keen disappointment that I would not join him and help him to build a great Pakistan. In cases where he gained his point he could act magnanimously towards an opponent. A very distinguished person with whom he had fallen out in pre-partition days told me how Jinnah offered to entrust him with the entire responsibility of guiding the foreign policy of Pakistan, as his own knowledge of foreign affairs, he said, was so meagre. My friend remarked that this instance was sufficient to show how magnanimous he could be," [1] Sir Mirza did not name the "very distinguished person", but it is not difficult to surmise that he referred to Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan. It is well-known that during Willingdon's viceroyalty, when Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan was the Executive Councillor, Mr. Jinnah in spite of his eminence in the political field, was kept out of the Round Table Conference in its later stages. Still, the Quaid entrusted the Foreign Affairs of Pakistan to him as he considered him to be the most suitable person for the job. Indeed, Quaid never permitted his personal sentiments to come in the way of his public duty.

Other qualities which are rarely attributed to him and of which evidence comes from another unexpected source are his freedom from communal hatred, keenness to safeguard the Hindu interests in Pakistan and his humanity. M. S. M. Sharma who was editor of the "Daily Gazette", Karachi, stayed on in Pakistan till the beginning of 1948. As a journalist, he had always taken a narrow, communal angle, and was so bitter against Pakistan that even the redoubtable Patel had to ask him to shed his "bitterness" before taking up his pen to write about the early days of Pakistan.

1. Sir Mirza Ismail, *My Public Life*, p. 100.

His *Peeps into Pakistan* was written some years later, but shows that even by then he had not attained an objectivity of approach. The book contains mistakes of fact and inference, but as expressing the thoughts and experiences of a Hindu who stayed on in Pakistan and was not friendly to the new country or to its founder, his remarks about the Quaid are of more than ordinary interest. He reveals that it was at the Quaid's instance that a Minorities' Association was established to safeguard the interests of the minorities. Indeed, he gives the gist of a long conversation which the Quaid had with him, and which deserves to be reproduced at length:

"The long and short of his lecture to me was just this. Now that he had got Pakistan, he had no longer any grudge against the Hindus. In fact, he was anxious to revert to his old and familiar role of 'Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity.' He proposed that he should continue as the champion of minorities in Pakistan as he had been for several years now, the champion of the minorities in India.

" Now, 'my dear fellow,' he roared, 'I am going to constitute myself as the Protector-General of the Hindu Minority in Pakistan. I am going to rely on your help. I am going to take no refusal'." [1]

There is plenty of evidence not only in Sharma's book but also in Quaid's public speeches of the period to show that he meant every word of what he said, and did his best to protect the interests of the Hindu minority inP akistan. When the *Dawn* started publishing what Sharma calls "fearful cartoons of things supposed to have occurred in India" and gave (according to Sharma, wrong) details of the butchery of Muslims, Jinnah encouraged Sharma to give his point of view, and "expose the mischief". Even more revealing is his reaction to the riot which was triggered off in Karachi owing to the arrival of a number of Sikhs, in an atmosphere charged with animosities arising out of the

1. Sharma, M.S.M., *op. cit.*, pp. 134-35.

reports from the East Punjab, and further aggravated by the entry of Indian troops in Kashmir. The Quaid tried to put down the trouble with peremptory orders. Sharma gives some important details of his reaction to this tragedy: "In fairness to Jinnah I must record that he was the most shocked individual in Pakistan. He visited the Hindu refugee camps and at least at one of them, the iron-man lost his nerve and shed a few tears." [1]

The account which Sharma gives of the Quaid shedding tears at a Hindu refugee camp will cause surprise. The Quaid had imposed such an iron discipline on himself and was so averse to a show of sentimental weakness, that very few would consider him capable of "tears". Evidence is, however, available from quite a different source to show that he had a tender heart below a stiff exterior. Altaf Hussain, the Editor of *Dawn*, saw things from an angle completely different from that of Sharma, but he also in an article entitled "When Quaid Wept", has recorded an occasion, when he saw Quaid quietly shedding tears over the sufferings of the Muslims in East Punjab. So far as Quaid's shedding of tears at a Hindu refugee camp is concerned, there is another eye-witness. Jamshed Nusserwanji, a former mayor of Karachi, told Hector Bolitho, "I beg you to believe that Mr. Jinnah was a humanitarian (*sic*). He was never generous in tears—oh, no—but I saw him weep, twice. Once was after Partition, in January 1948, when I went with him to see an encampment of Hindus who had stayed on in Pakistan. When he saw their misery, he wept. I saw the tears on his cheek." [2] The second occasion when Nusserwanji saw tears in Quaid's eyes were after his failure at Calcutta in 1928, to which a reference has already been made.

Sharma gives an account of the last meeting of the Council of All-India Muslim League held at Karachi on 15 December, 1947, at which, according to him, the Quaid made a "violent effort to convert the Muslim League into a non-communal and national organization whose membership would be thrown open

1. Sharma, M.S.M., *op. cit.*, p. 172.
2. Bolitho, *Jinnah, Creator of Pakistan*, p. 95.

to all citizens of Pakistan regardless of caste, creed, race or religion."[1] This historic meeting was not open to the public, and it is difficult to assess the accuracy of Sharma's version of the proceedings but there is a fair basis for believing that Quaid was not opposed to the opening, at a suitable time, of the door of the Muslim League to the members of other communities and converting it into a national organization. A few days after the meeting of the Council he was interviewed by the representative of the B.B.C. who asked him "whether the Muslim League would eventually transform itself into a national organization open to members of all religious communities?" Quaid-i-Azam replied: "The time has not yet come for a national organization of that kind. Public opinion among the Muslims of Pakistan is not yet ripe for it." He, however, significantly added, after warning against being dazzled by democratic slogans, "But the decision to form a purely Muslim organization in Pakistan is not irrevocable. It may be altered as and when necessary to suit changing conditions. Nothing is static in politics."[2]

Sharma says that at the Council, the Quaid-i-Azam did not have things in his own way. Even otherwise, according to him, Quaid could not control the anti-Hindu forces in the new state. He says, "Jinnah had greatly over-rated his hold on Muslims whom he could goad into lawlessness but he could not restrain them." He, however, leaves no doubt about the Quaid's own views and the efforts which he made to safeguard the interests of the minorities.

For Quaid-i-Azam—or Pakistan—Sharma is not a friendly or even a fair witness. He has some cheap, fanciful gibes at "the Sultan of Kashmir" and says many other unfair, unfriendly things about the Quaid. But this does not detract from—in fact, it adds to—the value of his testimony regarding the humane side of Quaid's personality which is corroborated not only by Quaid's speeches and actions as Governor-General but also by such

1. Sharma, M.S.M., *op. cit*, p. 182.
2. "Dawn," December 20, 1947.

evidence as is available. And what a far cry is all this from the popular image of the Quaid-i-Azam !

Apparently Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, whose detailed assessment has been reproduced at length by Bolitho[1] and regarded as "the wisest" of all estimates of the Quaid, was not far wrong, when she wrote :

"Never was there a nature whose outer qualities provided so complete an antithesis of its inner worth. Tall and stately, but thin to the point of emaciation, languid and luxurious of habit, Mohamed Ali Jinnah's attenuated form is the deceptive sheath of a spirit of exceptional vitality and endurance. Somewhat formal and fastidious, and a little aloof and imperious of manner, the calm hauteur of his accustomed reserve but masks—for those who know him—a naive and eager humanity, an intuition quick and tender as a woman's, a humour gay and winning as a child's. Pre-eminently rational and practical, discreet and dispassionate in his estimate and acceptance of life, the obvious sanity and serenity of his worldly wisdom effectually disguise a shy and splendid idealism which is the very essence of the man." [2]

II

The emotional, almost unintelligent manner in which the majority community reacted to the demand for Pakistan, has not only obscured the personality of the Quaid-i-Azam, but also cast a deep shadow on his work as statesman. The real test of his constructive statesmanship came when he became the Governor-General of Pakistan. Unluckily his tenure was too brief, but he worked during most difficult and crucial times, and his performance even within a limited time can give the measure of the man. Some indication of this has already been given. For a proper assessment of Quaid's qualities as a statesman, perhaps, the best method is a study of the slender volume of his "Speeches as Governor-General of Pakistan, 1947-48." They are, all "occa-

1. Hector Bolitho, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-14. 2. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

sional pieces" and most of the speeches are brief and businesslike, but they breathe cool wisdom, humanity and liberal, progressive ideas.

Quaid's place in history will, however, be determined on the basis of his supreme achievement—establishment of Pakistan. Before dealing with the consequences of this momentous step it is useful to point out the circumstances in which the decision in favour of division was taken. Even the time which Quaid took to make up his mind in favour of Pakistan would show that the decision was not taken lightly. Indeed, the question was too big to be decided easily by any leader of responsibility. Khaliq-uz-Zaman has given an account of his talks with the Quaid on 12 May, 1939 when he expounded the case for Pakistan. The Quaid's remarks were, 'Have you weighed the consequences ?" His reaction was that he was not opposed to it but, "it had to be examined in all its bearings."[1] Aga Khan has recorded his conviction that as late as 1946 the Quaid had not finally determined his goal.[2] Till the middle of the year, *i.e.*, till the Congress took up a strange and disturbing attitude with regard to the Cabinet Mission Plan—theoretically accepting it, but distorting the meaning of its basic provisions—, he had not made up his mind. Even, as late as 12 May, 1946, when the Muslim League officially placed its demands before the Cabinet Mission, it was prepared to entrust certain subjects to the Centre on certain conditions.[3]

Those who were in touch with the Quaid say that it was the Congress behaviour in the middle of 1946 which made him finally clinch the issue. He argued that if even when the British were in control, the Congress leaders could resort to such "bad faith",

1. Khaliquzzaman, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

2. *The Memoirs of Aga Khan*, p. 296.

3. Muslim League memorandum has been given by Khaliquzzaman at pp. 352-53 of his book, as also by Ram Gopal (p. 309). The latter has expressed keen regret that although now "difference between the proposals of the League and the Congress was one of degree only" the gesture from the League was not reciprocated. "The League had now to choose between the two alternatives, *i.e.*, to have its truncated Pakistan, or to accept the Congress concept of the future constitution of India," (pp. 310-11).

what would they not do when they were in full charge of affairs and controlled the army. After the experience of 1946, Quaid's mind was finally made up. He saw that safety for Muslims and the only way to avoid endless squabbles and conflicts between large Muslim-majority areas and Hindu India lay in a division of the sub-continent. He, now, set about his task not only with his usual singleness of purpose, but also in a new spirit of desperation. For the first time in its history, the Muslim League talked of Direct Action. Besides, Quaid made it clear that not only was there to be a division but also an immediate division of the armed forces. This, however, was a decision which was forced on him. All his life he had worked for peace, harmony and freedom of India, subject, of course, to the safeguarding of the Muslim position. Sharma says, "Jinnah's highest ambition in life was a hazy notion that he must be hailed as a born deliverer of men from bondage." [1] If his career is studied dispassionately, it would appear that his principal role in political life had been that of lifting the road blocks from the path of India's constitutional progress. When in the second decade of this century, future progress was likely to be hampered by lack of Hindu-Muslim agreement, he had a hand in drawing up the Lucknow Pact. Fifteen years later when at the Round Table Conference the Muslim delegates insisted that there should be no further discussion of the constitutional proposals, unless their claims were settled in advance, he intervened and successfully urged that proposals for further constitutional progress may be discussed, subject to the proviso that any implementation would be conditional on settlement of the Muslim claims.

Even the creation of Pakistan was, in reality, the lifting of a road-block. The two other alternatives were civil war, or prolongation of the British rule, which, as Attlee has revealed, was being suggested by Viceroy Wavell. The Quaid by successfully advocating a course, by which these disastrous alternatives were avoided, smoothed the path of India's freedom.

Quaid's conflict with the Congress which was in the vanguard

1. Sharma, M.S.M., *op. cit.*, p. 90.

of the struggle for Indian independence, has obscured his own passionate devotion to the cause of India's freedom. Menon, for example, has bemoaned that "Jinnah, the hero of my generation, a great nationalist in his time and one who fought many a battle for freedom of his country, should later have fought so successfully against its freedom . . ." [1] The last part of the sentence is a cruel misreading of the Quaid's role. He and Mahatma Gandhi differed on the mould in which India's freedom from foreign rule should be cast but on the basic goal of freedom there was no difference of opinion. Mahatma's slogan was "Quit India," while Quaid's demand was "Divide and Quit". The common element—"Quit" in the two demands is too obvious to need emphasis. It was this emphasis on freedom by the Muslim League which upset old Indian hands like Ismay. In the Interim Government, League and Congress representatives were at loggerheads, but on the demand for India's freedom, they were united. Lord Ismay, while explaining to Hector Bolitho the need for hastening the independence of India said, "There was another reason; the Viceroy's Executive Council which had been composed of six or eight wise men, had disappeared. We had, instead, a Cabinet of nine Congress leaders and five Muslim League leaders, who could agree on only one thought—that the British should quit India." [2]

One reason for misjudging the Quaid is that the advantages of Pakistan have not been fully realized. It is said, for example, that it has not solved the communal problem. The reference is, presumably, to the communal riots, which continue to take place in India. These could easily be controlled if the local administration is keen and alert. Even as it is, the enormous reduction in the size of the communal problem should not be lost sight of. From the point of view of Hindustan also, Pakistan has been a great blessing. It was not without reason that Vallabbhai Patel and V.P. Menon during "a lengthy discussion in December 1946 or early in January 1947", coolly weighed the relative advantages of the Cabinet Mission Plan and the division of India on the lines

1. Menon, V.P., *op. cit*, p. 437.
2. Hector Bolitho, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

which were later incorporated in the Third June Plan and came to the conclusion that the latter course was better.

So far as the advantages of Pakistan to areas which now constitute Pakistan are concerned, they are too obvious to need any emphasis. Even from the point of view of Hindustan, the division has been beneficial, and it may be useful to give a long quotation from the pen of Dr. Sachin Sen, a Hindu scholar:

"In undivided India, there would have been Muslim domination in the army and the utmost extension of provincial autonomy. In the Muslim majority areas, Muslim dominance would have been felt, and it would have spread unhealthy reaction in the Hindu majority areas. The spirit of communal exclusiveness would have been on the increase. The disadvantages of a weak Centre in the exploitation of economic resources of India had to be accepted. The ideals of one language, one citizenship would have been discouraged. In a partitioned India, the army is safe although the frontier is not. Militarily, there is the need for common defence measures and if Pakistan proves hostile and makes the Hindus dominant in the Indian Union, and if the synthesis of Hindu-Islamic culture which was growing in India is arrested, the possibilities of a revival movement in the Indian Union are great. In Pakistan, there is the declared intention of returning to Shariat laws and to the scheme of society proclaimed by the Prophet Muhammad. In divided India the revivalist movement may gain momentum, if there is the lack of vigilance and waning of enlightened, progressive democratic forces. Divided India is more politically and economically integrated. The unification of India with the native States would not have been complete in undivided India. A strong Centre, one language, one citizenship, all these have been possible in a partitioned India,"[1]

1. Sachin Sen, *The Birth of Pakistan*, p. 192. Sen refers to the problems of minorities in the two countries, but if the relations between the two governments were on a statesmanlike basis, the position of the minorities would improve, and they could become a source of strength and a link in promoting Indo-Pakistan co-operation.

Subject to the safeguarding of interests of the people who had put absolute faith in him, Quaid-i-Azam acted with moderation, goodwill and true patriotism. Even when Partition came, he bade farewell to India in a friendly spirit. The message which he gave on 7 August, 1947, *i.e.*, at a time when special trains carrying record for the future Pakistan Government to Karachi had been blown up and massacres in the Punjab had commenced, breathes the spirit of goodwill and friendliness. He expressed his hope that "the two Indias are parting as friends for ever". Owing to several factors this dream has had only a fitful realization. The two Governments were able to control the criminal forces which were let loose in 1947, and their relations might have improved but for Kashmir. This dispute virtually created a state of undeclared war and all remaining ties had to be rent asunder. Still Quaid-i-Azam remained cool and in spite of growing bitterness and long after the beginning of the Kashmir dispute – but before India's lack of good faith with regard to her pledge for plebiscite in Kashmir became manifest—he offered Joint Defence and even co-ordination between India and Pakistan "for the purpose of playing their part in international affairs."[1] Prime Minister Nehru's response (as expressed in reply to a question in the Indian Parliament) was positive, but obviously "Joint Defence" could not come about until—as Quaid pointed out—"Pakistan and India can resolve their own differences," particularly the Kashmir dispute. These differences have not been resolved with the result that India and Pakistan remain poles apart, and Pakistan has turned to other directions for friendship and security. The fact that those well-meaning Indian leaders, who want the two countries to be friendly, start talking of a Confederation has not helped matters. The possibility of a Confederation was knocked on the head when Patel and Menon decided against the Cabinet Mission Plan and the Congress asked for a division of Punjab and Bengal. Now the only possibility—in favourable times—is what Quaid called "some sort of a treaty" between two sovereign states, which, in view of the geography and history of Pakistan and India, may be substantial

1. For Quaid's historic statement and Nehru's observations, see Appendix II.

enough to include Joint Defence and other mutually beneficial arrangements. Indo-Pak amity will not be achieved unless India is really keen about it, has a better understanding of Pakistan's positive side, and can keep in check the urge to "get seventeen annas for the rupee". Even then bold and resourceful leadership will be needed in both countries, to reduce bitterness, prejudices and unconscious hostility, and to deal with the negative forces. At present, chances of an understanding are meagre and have been further reduced by Nehru's death just when, following the Chinese invasion of India, he was beginning to realize the perils of the traditional Indian attitude to Pakistan, but if some day the forces of statesmanship gain the upperhand, Quaid's approach to the question will provide a realistic—and adequate—basis.



(p. 327) NAWABZADA LIAQUAT ALI KHAN

CHAPTER 15

LIAQUAT ALI KHAN
(1896—1951)

NAWABZADA Liaquat Ali Khan was born in 1896 in Karnal District of East Punjab. He was the second son of a wealthy land-owning family, which came from Iran about 500 years ago, and claims descent from the famous Iranian king, Nausheerwan, the Just. The family owned landed estate in Punjab and United Provinces, and young Liaquat spent his formative years in U. P., which was at that time the home of Muslim culture. He graduated in 1918 from Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College of Aligarh, and left a year later for higher studies in England. He joined Exeter College at Oxford and also kept terms for the Bar. He took his degree in Law in 1921 and was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in 1922. During his stay at Oxford, Liaquat Ali Khan took active part in political debates for which the Indian Majlis at Oxford has always been known and was the treasurer of that organisation for some time. His views, however, even at this stage of his life and in the exuberant atmosphere of Oxford were marked by sobriety and a deep understanding.

After his return to India, Liaquat Ali Khan settled down in U.P. In 1926 he was elected to the U.P. Legislative Council where he sat for 14 years, six of them as deputy president and leader of the Democratic Party. In 1940 he was elected to the Central Legislative Assembly, where he immediately became the deputy leader of the Muslim League Party under the leadership of the Quaid-i-Azam. Perhaps even more important was his election as Secretary of the All-India Muslim League, which office he occupied for the first time in 1937. Being by nature more suited to quiet, constructive work and shunning lime-light, his great qualities were not known to many but the great Quaid

who had seen him closely at work knew his worth and descibed him as his "right hand" in a public speech. The second volume of "Recent Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah" contains the following item regarding his re-election as Honorary Secretary of the All-India Muslim League at the Karachi session on December 26, 1943 :

"In putting the proposition to vote Mr. M.A. Jinnah described Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan as 'my right hand'. He, the Nawabzada, had 'worked and served' day and night, and none could possibly have an idea of the great burden he shouldered. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, Jinnah continued, commanded the universal respect and confidence of the Musalmans. Though a Nawabzada, he was a thorough proletarian, and he hoped other Nawabs in the country would follow his example. Jinnah paid a tribute to the General Secretary for the services he had rendered to the League during the last seven years and wished him a long life of service to the community."

The great opportunity of Liaquat Ali Khan's life came in 1946, when he was appointed to the Viceroy's Executive Council and became Finance Member in the Indian Interim Government, which preceded the Partition. This was an office which called for solid, constructive work rather than the histrionic exuberance of the average Indian politician, and here Liaquat was in his element. After 20 years of parliamentary experience in Lucknow and Delhi, he was of course a master of the parliamentarian technique, effective in speeches and quick in repartees. With his dignity and courtesy of the old Muslim aristocracy, he was bound to be popular with all sections of Indian society, but what surprised everybody was his great success as Member in charge of a portfolio which was not supposed to be the special domain either of Muslims or of old aristocracy. He not only quickly mastered the routine of work in the Finance Department but introduced changes which were noteworthy for their soundness, originality and benefits to the under-dog. His memorable budget, which made "many a multimillionaire turn grey overnight" extorted grudging approval even from the Congress opponents and was

widely acclaimed as "a poor main's budget". Some people in Bombay and Ahmedabad thought that the budget was dictated by political motives but this was not so. In spite of his high birth and the general style of his living those who knew the Nawabzada intimately say that he had a marked streak of "the other-worldliness" and his love for the under-dog was deep and sincere. Presumably the Quaid was referring to this, when he said that "though a Nawabzada, he was a thorough proletarian", and it was this love which was responsible for his "poor-man's budget."

Liaquat Ali Khan was the leader of the Muslim League Party in the Indian Interim Government and his appointment as Premier of Pakistan followed almost inevitably. This meant a great increase in his responsibilities and opportunities. Of course, so long as the Quaid was alive, the ultimate responsibility for matters of highest national importance continued to be his but the Prime Minister was responsible for carrying out all decisions and in most cases for taking them with the help of his Cabinet. After Quaid's death, Liaquat's responsibilities increased a hundred-fold. Although there was no change in his office, he became, by common consent, the Quaid's successor. He was Quaid's chief lieutenant during his lifetime and so he stepped into his shoes after his death but it was not an easy task to fill the void created by the death of the father of the nation. Quaid had led the people to their goal and had, therefore, all those advantages which national heroes can command. His word was law. Nobody asked questions once he had pronounced a verdict. Liaquat took over Quaid's responsibilities without the advantages which the Quaid had. He had to work hard to display all his qualities of sound judgment and constructive statesmanship before he could earn the confidence of the people. Outside Pakistan the number of those who doubted his—and in fact any Pakistani's—ability to fill the void left by the Quaid was much larger. As a matter of of fact, many newspapers in England and America openly stated that with the architect's death "the house that Jinnah built" would collapse. The fact that the Quaid's death coincided with the downfall of Hyderabad greatly added to the prevailing gloom and increased Liaquat's difficulties. The way he mastered

these difficulties and discharged his onerous responsibilities can be seen now by reference to the pages of the same foreign newspapers. A leftist critic, while comparing Liaquat Ali Khan with Pandit Nehru and the Quaid-i-Azam says that "although he lacks their public appeal, his abilities as an administrator and political boss are superior to either of them." "The Manchester Guardian" in a leading article summed up the position by saying about Nawab Liaquat Ali Khan, "... for nearly three years he has been building up his present commanding position. Courage, humanity, practical idealism, and skill in handling his political colleagues are the qualities which equipped him for his task in Pakistan. His patient work is now beginning to earn recognition from the world. He is passing from the status of national statesman to an international one. He belongs to the small group of world figures by whom international destinies are decided. *The best testimony to him is the condition of Pakistan today.*" [Italics ours]

Not only was Pakistan able to adjust herself to the death of the Quaid without any political or administrative dislocation, but under the wise statesmanship of his successor, Pakistan maintained a continuous record of progress and consolidation. Her economic strength was put to a severe test when after the devaluation of the pound, almost all countries in the sterling area devalued their currencies and only Pakistan stood out. Very few outside Pakistan thought that she would be able to maintain this attitude for long. It was felt that economic forces would prove too strong, and she would have to reconsider her decision. India, on which Pakistan depended for supply of coal and other necessities, and for sale of her major commercial crops like jute and cotton, was so put out by Pakistan's decision that she refused to recognise the new exchange rate of Pakistani rupee and a trade war started between the two dominions. India with her vast economic resources and ability to hold on was sure of victory. She allowed her mills at Ahmedabad and Calcutta to be closed and thousands of labourers kept out of work for want of cotton and jute rather than purchase these commodities from Pakistan. She refused to supply coal, without which, it was thought, Pakistan's communications would be halted. This economic war lasted for more than a year, and of course involved

great efforts and sacrifices on the part of Pakistan. It was not only a struggle against a powerful neighbour. Behind India were ranged, in the distant background, the forces of other countries of the sterling area, which were adversely affected by Pakistan's decision. For a good while not only the jute magnates of Calcutta but also of Dundee kept off the East Bengal market. Indian newspapers freely talked of "Dundee-Calcutta Axis". But Pakistan proved equal to the task. She found new markets for her produce and was similarly able to purchase elsewhere the coal and other stuff for which she depended on India. Ultimately, on 25 January, 1951, India had to accept the par value of Pakistani rupee, and the 17-month-old trade deadlock was resolved. If Pakistan attained political independence in 1947, it attained full commercial independence 3½ years later and though the two countries, in their mutual interest, resumed a well-regulated trade, Pakistan emerged stronger and economically more independent on account of the "cold war". The problems arising out of the economic war with India were tackled by the Ministry of Commerce—particularly the Jute Board—and the Ministry of Finance, but the Prime Minister, who had overall responsibility for major national policies must share with them the credit for economic consolidation of Pakistan.

Same sturdy independence was displayed in the sphere of foreign relations. Since the day of Sir Syed, the relations between Indian Muslims and British officers in India have been usually smooth, and marked by understanding and goodwill. A large majority of Indian soldiers, who bled for the Empire in the two World Wars consisted of Muslims from areas which are now a part of Pakistan. These relations, however, became severely strained on account of the policy followed by the Labour Government during the last stages of British connection with India. There was intense and widespread bitterness against the part played by Lord Mountbatten, Sir Evan Jenkins and Sir Cyril Radcliff in "the final phase" but Pakistani authorities kept their heads cool. Not only their attitude towards British Commonwealth was less equivocal than that of India, but they employed a large number of British officers in positions of trust and power.

It, however, became obvious that this policy was not being properly appreciated in London. It was being attributed, it was felt, to Pakistan's weaknesses rather than to a desire to maintain a policy, which had been of advantage not only to Muslim India but to Great Britain. It was left to Liaquat Ali Khan to dispel these illusions. While in London in April 1949, in connection with a Commonwealth Conference, he met the representatives of the press, and gave a warning that Pakistan "could not be taken for granted." On his way home he received and accepted an invitation to visit Moscow as the guest of U.S.S.R. Government. This visit did not materialise and too much need not be read into acceptance of the Moscow invitation, but it underlined the fact that Pakistan was not to be "taken for granted".

In the field of Indo-Pakistan relations Liaquat Ali Khan's personal contribution was even more striking. Bharat and Pakistan came into existence, as a result of a scheme, which was accepted and publicly endorsed by the representatives of the two organisations, now controlling the Governments in the two countries—the Congress and the League. To secure the concurrence of the Congress to its scheme of Pakistan, the League made a huge sacrifice—by accepting the proposal to partition Muslim-majority provinces of Bengal and Punjab. Not only was the general scheme of Partition mutually agreed—and basically fair—but the interests of the two countries require that they should work in close harmony. But a major operation like the partitioning of a sub-continent must leave "loose ends" of great size and complexity, which can be tied up only in an atmosphere of goodwill, understanding, and constructive statesmanship. Unluckily, owing to the events before and after the Partition this atmosphere has been usually lacking. Relations between India and Pakistan have been generally bad, and often they have been on the brink of war. Situation was particularly grim in the spring of 1950, when India had lined up her mechanized brigade and other troops on the borders of East Pakistan and the war-polls conducted by the newspapers in Bombay and Calcutta showed a vast majority of readers in favour of war with Pakistan. These were the conditions when Liaquat Ali Khan agreed to pay his first visit to New

Delhi since the Partition to discuss things with the Prime Minister of India. Not a few in Karachi were critical of this decision. Newspapers made veiled and unveiled references to the treatment meted out by India to her liberator—Mahatma Gandhi. But Liquat Ali Khan carried out his peace mission boldly, and Nehru-Liaquat Pact was signed, under which the war between the two countries was averted, and a vigorous positive effort was made to improve the situation.

The significance of Liaquat's contribution at this juncture can be realized from the fact that not only was he able to come to terms with Prime Minister Nehru but impressed Sardar Patel with his "earnestness and visible sincerity". At that time opinion in the Indian Cabinet was sharply divided over the desirability of coming to a settlement with Pakistan. Two ministers—Shyama Parshad Mukerji and K.C. Neogy—resigned in protest against Nehru-Liaquat Pact. Patel, also, was of two minds, but Liaquat was able to persuade him to make this effort to bring the two countries closer. In a broadcast from Calcutta on 21 April, 1950, Patel said:

"I also know that my West Bengal friends are definitely worried about the concept of an Islamic State and the consequences which, in the light of history, such a concept is taken to entail. In the face of a clear acceptance of fundamental principles of democracy by the Prime Minister of Pakistan we have no alternative but to mark time and to put it to the test. The one thing that made a profound impression on me in accepting Prime Minister's assurances at their face value was the earnestness and visible sincerity with which he laid stress on the need of bringing the two countries closer in our life-time. We have at least the background of previous associations and of past friendship and goodwill; the new generation will grow under the full belief and faith in absolute separation." [1]

Nehru-Liaquat Pact did not bring all the results that were

1. "Statesman," April 23, 1950.

expected. They were, indeed, impossible of achievement without India's sincerity in carrying out her commitments regarding Kashmir, but an ugly situation in both countries was avoided. In interal matters Liaquat Ali Khan followed an equally sound policy. Under his guidance every effort was made to run the administration on sound, healthy and progressive lines. There is not a small danger of an atmosphere of "palace" or "court" intrigues developing round seats of authority in Eastern countries. Adventurers are not lacking amongst politicians—and even civil servants!—who for short-sighted gain might encourage the development of such an atmosphere. Pakistan has, of course, been lucky in this as the Quaid-i-Azam set up very high traditions. He was all-powerful in the state which he brought into existence but he exercised his power in a constitutional, well-regulated and conscientious manner, worthy of the most progressive and democratic countries. Liaquat Ali Khan maintained the high traditions he inherited from the Quaid. There was nobody who was more anxious to uphold the independence and prestige of the Pakistan Public Service Commission than the Prime Minister and his actions were directed towards seeing that Government should be run on well-recognised and sound principles rather than according to the personal idiosyncracy of any Minister or himself.

The Quaid was very keen to raise the standard of political life in Pakistan. He had no hesitation in dismissing an all-powerful provincial Premier because allegations of maladministration and nepctism were received against him. One of the measures which he brought on the Statute Book within the first year of the inception of Pakistan was the Anti-Corruption Act and he took immediate steps to set up a machinery for enforcing the Act. Liaquat Ali Khan more than maintained Quaid's policy in this respect. At least, in the beginning, his position was not as strong as that of the Quaid in dealing with powerful politicians, who allowed serious abuses to creep into their administration. As a matter of fact, in the opinion of some shrewd observers, he did himself some damage and made powerful enemies for himself when he insisted on the Quaid's policy being followed with regard to certain politicians in the Punjab and Bengal. But it is greatly

to his credit that he ignored these considerations and did his best to build up a healthy and clean political life in Pakistan.

One of the major problems with which Liaquat Ali Khan had to deal soon after the Quaid's death related to the adjustment of modernist and traditional viewpoints about the future of Pakistan. This is a problem with which all Muslim states have had to deal and their solutions have differed widely—from secularism of Turkey to extreme traditionalism of Saudi Arabia. In Pakistan the problem assumed a sharp political shape on account of the activities of Maulana Maududi and Jamaat-i-Islami, Maulana Maududi, who was at one time the editor of "Al-Jamiat", is a brilliant writer on religious subjects. Some years before the Partition he settled down at Pathankot in East Punjab, and started urging the establishment of *Hakumat-i-Ilahia* in the pages of his *Tarjaman-ul-Quran.* He took no part in the struggle for Pakistan and in fact he and his companions were generally critical of the Muslim League leadership. Massacres of East Punjab, however, forced him and his companions to seek asylum in Pakistan and he established his headquarters at Lahore. Here, he and his organization started a campaign for replacement of the Pakistan Penal Code and other statutes in operation during the British period by Islamic Law and acceptance of the view that the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan or Muslim legislature had no right to frame any constitution or initiate any laws which were not provided for in the Quran, as interpreted by qualified *ulama.* He made the following four-fold demand from the Pakistan Constituent Assembly in an interview which he gave to a representative of the *Dawn* in April, 1948 :[1]

"(1) Acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God (as against the sovereignty of the people in democracy) ;

(2) acceptance of Shariat as the basis of the constitution ;

(3) amendment of anti-Islamic laws and an assurance that no law contrary to Shariat will be enacted ; and

1. See *Dawn*, dated 6-4-48.

(4) the Pakistan Government to exercise its power within the limits of Shariat."

In dealing with Maulana Maududi the Government of Pakistan—a League Government—did not allow itself to be influenced by his past attitude towards the Muslim League. In fact, shortly after Partition, Jamaat-i-Islami offered their assistance in looking after certain refugee camps and the Punjab Government gladly accepted this offer of co-operation. Maulana was more than welcome at the Radio Pakistan—a State-controlled organization—and he broadcast a number of talks from Lahore Radio Station.

Soon, however, it appeared that the extremism of Maulana would involve him in a conflict with the Government. He, for example, advised Government servants against signing a pledge demanded by the West Punjab Government, until that Government became Islamic. He also expressed the view that fighting in Kashmir, where a large number of Pathans had gone to the rescue of their Muslim brethren, was not *Jehad*, as Pakistan had treaties with India. This view was severely criticised in the press and action was taken, by the Punjab Government, to detain Maulana under Punjab Public Safety Act in October, 1948. Shortly, thereafter, the question of enunciating the principles, under which Pakistan's constitution should be framed, came before the Constituent Assembly, and Liaquat Ali Khan made it clear that though his Government did not share Maulana Maududi's views about the future of Pakistan, they were determined to give the people the constitution wanted by them. On March 7, 1949, Liaquat Ali Khan brought before the Constituent Assembly what has been known as the Objectives Resolution and delivered a long speech in explaining its provisions. In the course of the discussions that followed the Leader of the Congress Party in the Assembly stated that he had consulted "some Lahore Ulama" [1]

1. The statement was universally taken to refer to *ulama* of Jamaat-i-Islami and this has not been contradicted either by the speaker or by the Jamaat.

and had been informed that a non-Muslim could not hold an office of importance in an Islamic State. Liaquat Ali Khan corrected him and stated that this would not apply to the state which they were envisaging and issued a warning, on the floor of the house, to those Lahore *ulama* who were misleading the public.

The full text of the Objectives Resolution was as follows :

"Whereas sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to God Almighty alone, and the authority which He has delegated to the State of Pakistan through its people for being exercised within the limits prescribed by Him is a sacred trust ;

"This Constituent Assembly representing the people of Pakistan resolves to frame a constitution for the sovereign independent State of Pakistan ;

"Wherein the State shall exercise its powers and authority through the chosen representatives of the people ;

"Wherein the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice as enunciated by Islam shall be fully observed ;

"Wherein the Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in the individual and collective spheres in accord with the teaching and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Quran and the Sunna ;

"Wherein adequate provision shall be made for the minorities freely to profess and practise their religions and develop their cultures ;

"Whereby the territories now included in or in accession with Pakistan and such other territories as may hereafter be included in or accede to Pakistan shall form a Federation wherein the units will be autonomous with such boundaries and limitations on their powers and authority as may be prescribed ;

"Wherein shall be guaranteed fundamental rights including equality of status, of opportunity before law, social, economic and political justice, and freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association, subject to law and public morality ;

"Wherein adequate provision shall be made to safeguard the legitimate interests of minorities and backward and depressed classes ;

"Wherein the independence of the judiciary shall be fully secured ;

"Wherein the integrity of the territories of the Federation, its independence and all its rights including its sovereign rights on land, sea and air shall be safeguarded ;

"So that the people of Pakistan may prosper and attain their rightful and honoured place amongst the nations of the world and make their full contribution towards international peace and progress and happiness of humanity."

The Objectives Resolution is a brief document, but its significance is realized if its background and the acute controversies, it successfully resolved are taken into consideration. The basic stand of the Jamaat-i-Islami which had carried on most active propaganda in favour of an Islamic State, but (curiously or characteristically ?) had not joined the struggle for establishment of Pakistan, was that sovereignty (including the law-making power) belongs to God alone and the legislature (or rather, the *ulama*) can only interpret what have been revealed as Divine Ordinances. This would have left no law-making power with the legislature, and completely diluted its authority. The Objectives Resolution attempted to reconcile the conflicting viewpoints by affirming that the "sovereignty over the entire Universe belongs to Allah Almighty alone" but followed it up by referring to "the sovereign independent state of Pakistan" and stipulated that the authority "within the limits prescribed by Him" was to be exercised by the people of Pakistan. Limitations on the power of

legislature were few. They related to the future alone, and excluded only those laws which were definitely "repugnant to Quran and Sunnah." This left a vast field, in fact, the main field of modern legislative activity, to be operated in accordance with the traditions and requirements of the Muslim community and according to sound, healthy principles of Islamic law, under the sovereign authority of legislature.

One demand of Jamaat-i-Islami was that Pakistan should formally declare itself to be an Islamic state. The Objectives Resolution did not provide this, but the only clause added in 1956 to the Objectives Resolution of 1949 and retained in the preamble to the constitution of 1962, laid down that "Pakistan would be a democratic State based on Islamic principles of social justice."

The other important demand on behalf of the group advocating an Islamic State was that the Muslims of Pakistan should be *compelled* to live in accordance with the teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah. The relevant provision in the Objectives Resolution was that the "Muslims of Pakistan should be enabled individually and collectively to order their lives in accordance with the teachings of Islam as set out in the Holy Quran and the Sunnah". The significance of the omission of an expression incorporating the idea of "compulsion" and selection of the word "enabled" can be realized, if it is recalled that Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, the leader of the theologians was a member of the Sub-Committee, which drafted the Objectives Resolution, and co-piloted it along with the Prime Minister, in the Constituent Assembly. The entire approach of the Objective Resolution was that while Pakistan should be a progressive, modern state and not a theocratic, medieval government like the former Saudi Arabia or Yemen, yet every attempt should be made to translate the people's dream of an Islamic social order into action. The Constitution of 1956, and following it the Constitution of 1962 maintained the same approach. The idea of "compulsion" in the fields normally left out of the purview of a modern state was not incorporated but elaborate provision was made through directive principles not only for "enabling" the people to order their lives in accordance

with the Quran and Sunnah but also for their Islamic education and for propagation of Islamic values.

At least, some Western scholars have grasped the historic importance of the Objectives Resolution. For example, Professor Grunebaum, after reproducing the Resolution *in extenso* (and referring to some provisions of the constitution of Pakistan) remarks, "It would seem to me that on the theoretical level at least, as good an integration of traditional and Western ideas has been reached in this document as one might reasonably expect," [1] and later, he adds that "the attempted bridging of the gap between the Muslim tradition and the Western-inspired idea of the nation-state deserves the greatest attention." [2]

If the balanced and comprehensive approach to the ideological problem which Liaquat Ali Khan had been advocating succeeds and can be worked out in detail by scholars and thinkers, he would have rendered a great service not only to Pakistan but to many other Muslim countries which are faced with the same problem. Of course, this is not going to be easy. If it is to be achieved, Pakistan will have to produce another Iqbal—or at least somebody, who working on the foundations already laid by Shah Waliullah, Amir Ali and Iqbal can attempt a new synthesis. This may or may not be possible in the near future, but at any rate Liaquat Ali Khan deserves credit for having maintained a sane and balanced stand—in spite of criticism from those who do not fully realise the implications of Maulana Maududi's original viewpoint.

Liaquat Ali Khan was, by all accounts, a great success as a Prime Minister, but two important factors which contributed to this deserve to be mentioned. One is the spirit and the quality displayed by the average Pakistani. Of course, the leaders and the Government have helped but the real explanation of Pakistan's ability to deal successfully with her heart-breaking problems lay

1. Grunebaum, G. E. V., *Modern Islam*, p. 230.
2. *Ibid.*

in the tenacity, fanatical devotion and self-sacrifice of the man in the street. Nobody was more conscious of this than Liaquat. While addressing the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, during his tour of the United States, he stated frankly :

"What enabled Pakistan to tide over the post-partition problems was neither experience nor skill—for we possessed little of either—but the sheer determination of the people and their intense patriotism. This continues to be our greatest asset and is a very steadying factor in an uncertain part of the world."

The second important factor is the ability and patriotism displayed by some Government servants. When Pakistan came into being, the number of senior, trained and experienced Muslims in the services was very small. To some extent the gap was filled by employment of foreign personnel, but the brunt has been borne by the Pakistani officers. This has been possible only because several amongst them have been doing the work of two or three men and have sacrificed all social pleasures, comforts and amenities to give Pakistan a chance. Of course, this is not true of all or perhaps even majority of Government servants—and generally speaking, it is more true of the officers at the Centre and in East Bengal—but the proportion of such officers had been substantial enough to enable Pakistan to tide over her initial handicaps. This aspect of the new state has been duly noticed by foreign observers. After a visit to Karachi, Mr. A. D. Mani, Editor "Hitavada" wrote in "Free Press Journal" of Bombay, that in Pakistan "the devotion of the services to the welfare of the State, as they conceive it, is far more pronounced" than in India. "The services in Pakistan, by and large, are prepared to undergo any sacrifice, for the maintenance of the stability of the Pakistan State." [1]

The tradition of criticising bureaucracy is so deep-rooted in this sub-continent that it is difficult for the civil servants to expect bouquets from their own press, but the role of services in

1. *Free Press Journal*, dated 19-9-49.

making a success of "a mutilated" Pakistan has been so distinguished that even the press in Pakistan cannot ignore it. In a leading article "Morning News" of Dacca wrote:

"There is general public acknowledgment of the fact that since partition quite a number of the officers of the Pakistan Administrative and Police Service in East Pakistan have risen to unattainable heights in discharging loyally and efficiently their duties by the State and the people." [1]

Pakistan has been well served by her officers but cannot Liaquat Ali Khan claim some credit for making a suitable selection of key-men? When the Quaid-i-Azam died and Liaquat stepped into his shoes, the *Observer* of London wrote about him:

"... But most valuable to him (Liaquat Ali Khan) now is the experience he gained through 21 years of administration, with the *insight into character and the practice in choosing men* that this gave him."

Under Liaquat's leadership, Pakistan was able to belie the forebodings of those who thought that with Jinnah's death "the house that Jinnah built" will collapse. He consolidated the foundations and began to build up the new edifice. With his charm, intelligence and good sense he impressed all those who came in contact with him and was able to raise the prestige of the country. In March 1950 he toured U.S.A. at the invitation of the government and favourably impressed those he met. Internationally, he was thought a worthy successor of the Quaid-i-Azam. It would, however, be idle to pretend that he possessed the Quaid's authority. He maintained his position more as an arbitrator than as a leader, and met with one or two serious reverses. His dismissal of Mamdot Government displeased many who had faced and brought to knees the Unionist regime in 1947. The Governor-General Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din condemned the Punjab government in strong language, echoing the thoughts and

1. *Morning News*, Dacca, dated May 13, 1950.

style of Sir Francis Mudie. The fact that Khan of Mamdot was ultimately exonerated strengthened the feeling that he had not received a fair deal, and even Liaquat found it necessary to curb the autocracy of the British Governor. He suggested the appointment of Advisers, in the absence of a Council of Ministers, and considering that after the resignation of the Congress ministers during the War, even the British authorities had appointed Advisers to assist the provincial Governors, the step taken by Liaquat was fully justified. Mudie, however, resisted and Liaquat allowed him to resign and leave. The decision of Liaquat's government to accept the cease-fire in Kashmir at the time it did—"to the army's horror" [1]—has also been criticised. Perhaps a final judgment on this question cannot be passed, till more data is available and all considerations underlying this fateful decision are known. A development which must have caused Liaquat great personal disappointment and which led to delay in the country's progress on the constitutional road was the successful resistance to the Interim Report of the Basic Principles Committee which he submitted to the Constitutent Assembly in September, 1950. There was such widespread opposition to these proposals that they had to be withdrawn. This was the low ebb of Liaquat's political career, but there is no doubt that he would have, in course of time, found a solution. Unluckily he was not spared long for the purpose ; on 16 October 1951, he fell a martyr to the bullet of an assassin. His death was a staggering blow to Pakistan, and the ship of the new state entered troubled waters, but by then its seaworthiness had been established.

1. Major-General Fazal Muqeem Khan, *The Story of the Pakistan Army*, p. 115. The author has, however, pointed out clearly in the Preface, that the "views expressed and comments made" are entirely his own.

APPENDIX I

CULTURAL BASIS OF HINDU-MUSLIM SEPARATISM

ON pages 35 and 37 we have referred to the beginning of Hindi-Urdu controversy in the seventh decade of the last century and have given an account of Syed Ahmad Khan's conversations with the Commissioner of Benares in 1867 as well as a translation of his letter, dated 29 April, 1870, prophesying that the Hindu attempt to replace Urdu by Hindi would strike at the root of Hindu-Muslim unity. After our book was sent to the press, we have had access to Dr. Asoke Majumdar's[1] *Advent of Independence*, which provides important additional material regarding the cultural history of the period. As this book is not easily available in Pakistan, some of the relevant details are given below.

The data provided by Dr. Asoke Majumdar clearly indicates that the Hindus took the lead in Hindu-Muslim separatism. After referring to "the beginning of the nationalist movement which was essentially Hindu and Bengali in character",[2] he points out that the successors of Ram Mohan Roy "were essentially Hindu religious or social reformers". By 1867 the idea of Hindu nationalism was finding expression in influential quarters. In that year, "Rajnarain Bose (maternal grandfather of Sri Aurobindo) who started the idea of nationalism in Bengal" initiated "the Hindu-mela, which met annually from 1867 to 1880, and for which Tagore wrote two charming songs. Inspired by the Hindu-mela, the 'National Society' was founded in 1870 to promote unity and

1. Dr. Asoke Majumdar is the son of the well-known Indian historian, R.C. Majumdar and is Assistant Editor of the series, *History and Culture of the Indian People*, being published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay.

2. Majumdar, A. K., *Advent of Independence*, p. 39,

national feelings among the Hindus."[1] When objection was taken to the use of the word "national" for a Hindu organization, the *National Paper*, the organ of the Hindu-mela replied, "We do not understand why our correspondent takes exception to the Hindus (*sic*) who certainly form a nation by themselves, and as such a society established by them can very properly be called a national society." [2]

Dr. Majumdar points out "that in those days and even later the term 'Bengali' meant only the Hindu residents of Bengal, while the Muslims of Bengal were invariably referred to as Muslims. The only other large group of Muslims were to be found in the Punjab, but the Bengalis invariably referred to the Sikhs when speaking of the 'Punjabis' and it was the martial exploits of the Sikhs which raised an echo in the hearts of the Bengali nationalists. They also took to heart the struggle of the Marathas and the Rajputs against the Muslims. Bankim wrote several historical novels painting the Rajput Princes as the flower of chivalry and the Muslims – with one exception—as discomfited villains. These novels were translated in all the Indian languages and their effects can be imagined. Bankim's novels were based on Tod's *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* which sustained the Hindu revivalist movement to a degree not usually appreciated."[3] He adds, "Tagore wrote poems on Rajput, Sikh and Maratha heroes, but except for the solitary poem on the Tajmahal where he had to bring in Shahjahan, no figure of Muslim India stirred his imagination to bring out a verse.... The result was that the Bengali language which developed during the nineteenth century produced a "Hindu" literature." [4]

The same separatist trend was now visible with regard to Persian, which hed been extensively cultivated by the Hindus of Bengal during the early parts of the nineteenth century.[5] As

1. Majumdar, A. K., *Advent of Independence*, pp. 39-40.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 40. 3. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41. 4. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
5. For a remarkable study of the interest shown in Persian and Urdu by Bengali Hindus during the XIX Century see Shanti Ranjan Bhattacharya's *Bengali Hinduon ki Urdu Khidmat* (Urdu). It reached us when the appendices were in the press.

Dr. Majumdar points out, "Raja Ram Mohan Roy knew both Persian and Arabic but none of his successors did, who were all Sanskrit scholars."[1] He remarks elsewhere : "Tagore's father had some poems of Hafiz translated into Bengali. Tagore must have read it, but I have failed to trace any mention of Hafiz in Tagore's work. Other Tagores of the poet's generation translated important works into Bengali ; his brother having translated Tilak's Marathi *Gitarahasya.* Vivekananda's father also was a great admirer of Hafiz but he had not read the *Gita.* Vivekananda on the other hand, was a good Sanskrit scholar, but knew no Persian."[2]

The developments which made Bengali a Hindu language also took place in other modern languages in Hindu areas. Dr. Majumdar remarks, "The other modern Indian languages also developed rapidly during the nineteenth century ; of the South Indian languages, Tamil had a long tradition behind it, but entirely Hindu, and was developed by the Hindu writers. Modern Marathi inherited the tradition of the medieval saints like Namadeva and Jnanadeva ; Gujarati, Oriya, and Assamese, also followed similar trends. The literary movement in India, of which they felt justly proud, was essentially the work of Hindu writers, based largely either on Sanskrit or medieval Bhakti literature ; new ideas were borrowed from English literature."[3]

Developments in predominantly Hindu areas or even in Bengal did not lead to any serious problem. According to Dr. Majumdar, "This was possible because in all these areas Muslims were an insignificant minority, and in Bengal far behind the Hindus intellectually ; but trouble arose in the Hindi-speaking area where Urdu had so far been the dominant language."[4] With regard to Hindi-Urdu controversy, about which Syed Ahmad Khan's reaction has been given elsewhere, Majumdar says, "In the early nineteenth century Hindustani, or the language of Upper India, really signified Urdu. It is difficult

1. Majumdar, A. K., *Advent of Independence*, p. 41.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 57. 3. *Ibid.*, p. 41. 4. *Ibid.*

to determine as to when the Hindus began to agitate against Urdu, but beginning from 1869 the Hindus are found organizing meetings to mobilize public opinion and appealing to the government to replace Urdu, a Muslim language, by Hindi, 'the national language of the country'. In Bihar, then a part of Bengal, orders were issued to replace Urdu by Hindi written in Nagari characters ; persistent attempts were made to ignore the order and was only given effect to in 1881 after peremptory orders had been issued by Sir Ashley Eden, the Lt.-Governor."[1] According to Majumdar Bengali officers serving in Bihar played an important part in replacement of Urdu by Hindi in that area. "At this time Bihar was administratively a part of Bengal and the introduction of Hindi was mainly due to the Bengali officers to whom Sanskritized Hindi presented no difficulty. As Sanskrit was printed in Nagri script, they preferred Nagri to the unknown Arabic script of Urdu."[2] In course of time the demand was also taken up in U. P. Majumdar says elsewhere, "A lecture on Nagree vs. Urdu was delivered by Baboo Boodhee Bullubh Punt at Nynee Tal Institution on August 28, 1869. Boodhee Bullubh's lecture was virulently anti-Urdu. The President, Mr. Gunga Dutt Punt in course of his speech said that "as Urdoo only took its rise on the conquest of the country by the Mahomdedans and as it was for the convenience of the said conquerors that it was introduced, now that the Mahomedans have in their turn been conquered by a race talking neither Urdoo nor Hindi, the national language of the country should be reverted to, *viz.*, Hindi . . ."[3]

Incidentally Majumdar gives some interesting details regarding the Muslims of Bengal. After referring to the series of the Wahabi trials from 1864 to 1871, he says, "The result of the post-Mutiny activities of the Wahabis, however, was inimical to the interests of their community. The British became convinced that neither the Sikhs nor the Marathas, but the Muslims were their real and implacable enemy. The

1. Majumdar, A.K., *Advent of Independence*, pp. 41-42.
2. *Ibid*, p. 57.
3. *Ibid*.

Muslims of Bengal had taken the most active part in the Wahabi movement, while those of U. P. were quite indifferent to it. So the Bengali Muslims were gradually deprived of government patronage and jobs, while no harm befell the U. P. Muslims."[1] Even before this Bengali Muslims had suffered owing to their poor knowledge of English, and local regulations which affected them adversely. "In the U P., knowledge of English was not essential for several important appointments, but it was made obligatory in Bengal where the Muslims stood aloof from the new schools and colleges."[2] Majumdar adds, "But in 1863, Nawab Abdul Latif, who had been opposing the Wahabi movement, founded the pro-British Muhammadan Literary Society, and five years later (January 30, 1868) made a vigorous plea for the English education of Muslim boys and suggested the elevation of the Anglo-Persian department of the Calcutta Madrassa to the status of a college. Abdul Latif's idea was partly realized in 1873, when the munificent legacy of Muhammad Mohsin was converted into a Trust Fund to pay two-thirds of the fees of any Muslim student in any English school or college in Bengal."[3] Later another factor crept in so far as the Bengali Muslims were concerned. "Their leaders like Amir Ali and Abdul Latif insisted that Urdu and not Bengali was the language of the Bengali Muslims, and that instructions should either be given in Urdu or in a highly Persianized Bengali. Though the Government remained somewhat indifferent to this demand, the Muslims took it up seriously till the formation of Pakistan, after which the East Pakistani Muslims began to agitate for the recognition of Bengali as their national language. and a few Muslim students were shot dead at Dacca by the Muslim Police. But till 1947, the Bengali Muslims considered Bengali as a Hindu language, and Urdu as their mother tongue. The non-Bengali Muslims, like Amir Ali, or Abul Kalam Azad never learned Bengali, and this ignorance was a hallmark of aristocracy in Muslim Bengal."[4]

1. Majumdar, A.K., *Advent of Independence*, p. 43.
2. *Ibid.* 3. *Ibid.*, p. 44. 4. *Ibid.*, pp. 44, 45.

APPENDIX II

QUAID-I-AZAM'S OFFER OF A JOINT DEFENCE PACT WITH INDIA AND PRIME MINISTER NEHRU'S REACTION

I

THE following extracts are from an account of the interview given by Quaid-i-Azam to Dr. Eric Streiff, special correspondent of the *Neue Zurcher Zeitung*, Zurich (Switzerland):

Q. Is there any hope of India and Pakistan coming to a peaceful settlement of their own with regard to their differences and disputes on very vital and important matters?

A. Yes, provided the Indian Government will shed the superiority complex and will deal with Pakistan on an equal footing and fully appreciate the realities.

Q. In international affairs, will Pakistan and India work jointly and also join hands for the defence of their borders—both land and sea—and co-operate against any outside aggression?

A. Personally, I have no doubt in my mind that our own paramount interests demand that the Dominion of Pakistan and the Dominion of India should co-ordinate for the purpose of playing their part in international affairs and the developments that may take place, and also it is of vital importance to Pakistan and India as independent sovereign States to collaborate in a friendly way jointly to defend their frontiers both on land and sea against any aggression.

But this depends entirely on whether Pakistan and India can resolve their own differences and grave domestic issues in the

first instance. In other words, if we can put our house in order internally, then we may be able to play a very great part externally in all international affair." (*Dawn*, Karachi, dated 12-3-48).

II

New Delhi, March 29: The Prime Minister, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, indicated in the Indian Legislature today that the Government of India would gladly consider the question of joint defence with Pakistan "when the time is ripe for it."

Replying to Mr. Brajoshwar Prasad, Pandit Nehru said that Government had seen the Press report regarding Mr. Jinnah's offer to a Joint Defence Pact between India and Pakistan.

Q. Have the Government of India been approached either officially or non-officially by the Government of Pakistan for the conclusion of a joint defence pact?

Pandit Nehru: Government have received no such offer either officially or otherwise. The question of joint defence, however, is important from the point of view of both India and Pakistan and Government will gladly consider this when the time is ripe for it.—*API*. (*Dawn*, Karachi, March 31, 1948).

THE END